

SIERRA CLUB SPLIT ■ GREENSPAN'S FOLLY ■ BUSH SPACES OUT

MARCH 1, 2004

The American Conservative

NO END

HOW TO LOSE THE WAR ON TERROR

TO WAR

Patrick J. Buchanan

GOP STOCKHOLM SYNDROME

Like many of your contributors (and readers, I am sure), I am very unhappy with the current administration. I was a Republican, but I am now a registered Democrat. This is not to shun the Republican Party as a whole but to get this neocon out of the White House.

What baffles me are Republicans who continue to support Bush while complaining about his actions. This puts them in a position that could easily be viewed as “master and servants.” Any staunch Republican should be ashamed of making that sacrifice simply because our president is a Republican.

I met a very nice lady yesterday while filling up at the gas station. She insisted that Bush was correct in going to war because “we got Saddam.” “Imagine how Al Gore would have dealt with this war,” she said, “that would have been scary.” The fact of the matter is, we would not have gone to war in Iraq, but that possibility never entered her mind. That is scary.

Some people genuinely like Bush. Fine. But those who support him even though they disagree with his policies are doing a great disservice—to their country, their party, and themselves.

S. NICOLE HOUSTON

Tucson, Ariz.

THE NEW P.C.

Many thanks for publishing Anders Strindberg’s excellent, thoughtful, and well-informed article (Feb. 2). As a victim of Campus Watch, I am most grateful when other conservatives point to the pernicious actions of Daniel Pipes and Martin Kramer. They do threaten our liberty of expression and must be opposed.

CHARLES BUTTERWORTH

Department of Government & Politics
University of Maryland
College Park, Md.

DEADBEAT DAD

I found Georgie Anne Geyer’s article (Feb. 2) very illuminating: the analogy of President Bush to the *dauphin* and Dick Cheney to Cardinal Richelieu seems to me a fertile one. But the article also reminded me of something that has puzzled me. Ms. Geyer’s article emphasizes how different George W.’s foreign policy is from that of his cautious, internationalist, consensus-building father. Yet I have read that Bush *pere* and *fils* communicate by telephone almost every day and that the younger Bush views his father with a respect that borders on awe. My question is: if George W.’s imperial adventurism is really a result of naïveté and inexperience, why didn’t his dad talk him out of it? Surely the former president could have explained to his son that Mr. Cheney and his “court” are radicals trying out their Cold War/Likudnik ideology in a world where they don’t fit America’s national interests. Why didn’t he?

JAMIL NASIR

Gaithersburg, Md.

INTERFAITH COALITION

The Feb. 16 edition of *TAC* was simply amazing. From roasting GWB over his “immigration reform” to eulogizing G.K. Chesterton to Pat’s brilliant editorial, *TAC* scored another triumph!

Please convey my strongest congratulations to Taki for his end-page message this issue. As an Orthodox Jewish opponent of Mr. Sharon (and his U.S. allies), I know well of what he says. Just this month someone in synagogue called me a “wacko, irrational, Nazi, anti-Semite” for my combined opposition to the Iraq War, Mr. Bush’s immigration proposals, and Mr. Sharon’s brilliant policies. Yes, even Jews who wear yarmulkes on their heads and presumably would be mugged alongside cross-wearing Taki in a Paris Muslim suburb, aren’t safe from being

branded with the latest version of Hawthorne’s scarlet letter.

It is nice to be included in the same company as Taki and Pat. Every U.S. soldier downed in this terrible Iraqi quagmire, every latest suicide bombing in Israel, and every U.S. citizen out of work is a ringing testament of just how right our cause is.

DAVID L. BLATT

Chicago, Ill.

OUTFOXED

The position that our immigration laws must be liberalized in order to provide labor for “jobs that Americans won’t do” implies that Mexicans are only qualified to do menial, brainless labor. Instead of legally immigrating, becoming Americans, working hard and being rewarded with the fruits of their labor, immigrants today are merely supposed to pick fruit.

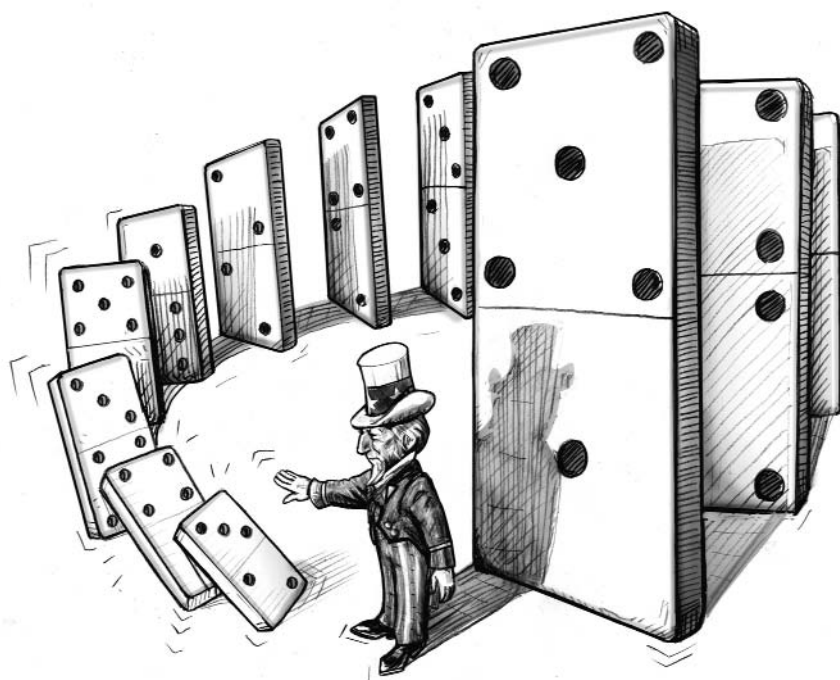
If you accept the premise that the seeds of revolt are sown in stomachs of the hungry, then our approach to enforcing our borders ensures that real and meaningful change will never take place in the corrupt nation of Mexico and other banana-republic Central American nations. For too long, America has served as a relief valve for those nations, allowing their rulers to live in luxury while their people live in squalor—or illegally immigrate to America. While I sympathize with their plight, I am not willing to give up my country when they are not willing to fight for theirs. Any amnesty legislation should be called the “Preserve the Two-Class System in Mexico and Central America Act.”

JOHN FARFAGLIA

Wilton, N.Y.

The American Conservative welcomes letters to the editor. Submit by e-mail to letters@amconmag.com, by fax to 703-875-3350, or by mail to 1300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 120, Arlington, VA 22209. Please include your name, address, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit all correspondence for space and clarity.

CHRIS HIERS



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[IMMIGRATION]

HILLARY TO THE RIGHT OF HIM

The news would have traveled no faster if President Bush had stood on our southern border and announced his amnesty proposal by megaphone. Within days of his Jan. 7 speech, Border Patrol officials noticed a dramatic surge in illegal crossings. According to the *San Diego Union Tribune*, of 162 Mexicans caught with phony documents at San Ysidro, 94 claimed they were trying to qualify for the new "guest worker" program. Most—insouciant about White House concerns that the "A" word not be used—asked how they could gain amnesty.

So profoundly unconservative is the president's plan that even liberal Hillary Rodham Clinton finds room to run to Bush's right. She told WABC, "I am, you know, against illegal immigrants They wouldn't be coming if we didn't put them to work."

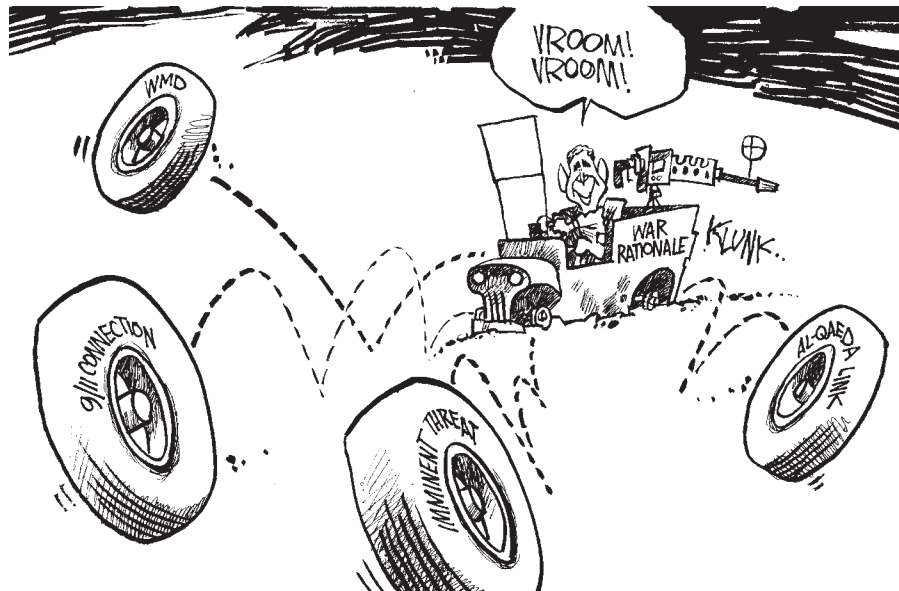
Far from breaking ranks, in this case HRC has a true read on American public opinion. A recent *Los Angeles Times*/CNN poll of likely Democratic voters revealed that 62 percent would prefer a presidential nominee who "would not make it easier for illegal immigrants to become citizens." Only 28 percent disagreed. Republican numbers are even more compelling—not that the Bush administration pays heed to its base. For reasons clear only to Karl Rove, it would rather bet on the San Ysidro gate-crashers.

[POLITICS]

DOS AMERICAS

"The presidential candidate John Edwards keeps saying there are two Americas. Today Bush said that's wrong, there's only one America. And then he repeated that in Spanish ... you know, for the other America."

—Jay Leno, 1/22/04



MIKE KEEFE www.caglecartoons.com

[OCCUPATION]

OPERATION ROMPER ROOM

Several friends of this magazine know Jay Hallen and by all accounts the 24-year-old Yale graduate is a bright light. But nothing on his short résumé recommends Hallen for the job he's been handed. This political science major, who has never invested in the stock market or followed financial news, is now charged with setting up the Baghdad exchange—from trading rules to regulatory agencies.

Even the *Wall Street Journal*, which played second to none in cheering on the Iraq invasion, expressed skepticism in its front-page profile. Middle-aged businessmen, accustomed to the status that age bestows in the Arab mind, are startled by this novice powerbroker. When the new stock market failed to open as scheduled, one investor commented, "Maybe someone older and more experienced could have gotten this done on time."

But spend no blame on Jay Hallen. It's not his lack of planning that has Romper Room running Baghdad. By some combination of inexperience and hubris, the Provisional Authority vastly underestimated the toil of democratizing a leveled nation and nourished the chaos by parachuting an assortment of political novices, Republican insiders, and think-tank wonks into high-level positions. As the *Washington Monthly* reported in December, Simone Ledeen, the 29-year-

old daughter of neocon notable Michael Ledeen, is test-driving her new MBA by reorganizing the Iraqi Ministry of Finance. Bush's business-school buddy Tom Foley is privatizing state-owned companies, and former Texas education commissioner, Jim Nelson, is advising the Ministry of Education.

And we wonder why a springtime of Iraqi democracy looks unlikely to coincide with the upcoming season?

[IDEAS]

ARON'S REGRET

Just returned from a lengthy interview with two French journalists preparing a book on the ever-fascinating subject of neoconservatism. Say what you will about the French, but these guys were more conversant with what had been written in English 15 years ago on the subject than all but about ten Americans I can think of.

Midway through, we paused on Raymond Aron, the French philosopher, international affairs "realist," and for many years virtually the sole voice in Parisian letters of a reasoned center-right perspective. I've long been an admirer and published a lengthy essay on Aron in *Commentary* after his death in 1983. A question: would Aron be a neoconservative today? One can tally up arguments for either side: his passionate defense of Israel and scathing rebuke to De Gaulle in 1967; or, conversely, his realist perspective in foreign affairs, and

his skepticism about empire and universalistic ideologies. One point for the “no” side: Aron’s memoirs, published near the end of his life. In the French edition, he tells of agreeing to serve as the European co-chair of Midge Decter’s “Committee for the Free World”—an ’80s Cold War group (of which I was once proud to be member). After the short paragraph, there is an asterisk leading to a footnote, which states simply, “I regret it now.” No further explanation, but one would certainly like to know more about what prompted the great Aron to express himself thus.

—SM

[INTELLIGENCE]

SCAPEGOATING LANGLEY

President Bush has ordered a commission to find out why the administration’s intelligence on Iraq was so poor. Naturally the conclusions will not be published until after the November election. According to the early spin put out by the president’s flacks and top neocons, the blame belongs in the top echelons of the CIA—where professional spies “sold the president a bill of goods.”

You needn’t hold a brief for George Tenet to sense the breathtaking falsity of this. Anyone following the run-up to the Iraq War knew from published reports that the principle battle over the nature of the Iraq threat was between professionals at the CIA—often accused of underestimating what Saddam was up to—and the neocon shadow intelligence operation set up in the Pentagon and exploited by Dick Cheney. In Rumsfeld’s shop was the Office of Special Plans, whose reason for being was to generate alarming intelligence conclusions that would justify war. Cheney visited Langley to pressure the Agency into demonstrating that Iraq was a huge danger. War hawk columnists regularly accused the CIA of being soft for downplaying the Saddam threat.

Of course we favor an investigation into why the president was so out to lunch on the nature of Iraq’s fanciful weapons of mass destruction. But any probe that ignores the activities of the vice president, the intelligence cookers under Rumsfeld’s supervision, and the Iraqi exiles who wanted American soldiers to set them up in palaces in Baghdad isn’t an investigation at all. It’s little more than an elaborate cover-up.

[CULTURE]

ARTLESS WASTE

Republicans could once be counted on to reach full shriek when their tax dollars were used to fund crosses dunked in urine, dung-smeared images of the Virgin Mary, and photographs of bullwhips in unmentionable places. No more. The National Endowment for the Arts, long a target of conservative disdain, has been adopted by our compassionate president—and he’s paying handsomely for the privilege. When the White House announced the endowment’s biggest funding increase in two decades, the caucus that once demanded the NEA be boarded up politely applauded.

At *National Review*, Mike Potemra was “heartened” by the “maturity of outlook on the part of conservatives.” And the *New Criterion*’s Roger Kimball optimistically forecasts that a Republican patron means more Shakespeare and less Mapplethorpe.

They miss the point. Obscenity masquerading as art deserves no subsidy. But then neither do “whatsoever things are lovely.” The Right has never bought the myth that high culture would sink without a federal lifeline. And with Bush’s latest budget running \$500 billion in the red, nude Karen Finley cavorting in chocolate and calling it art—even if she quotes *Hamlet* while she’s at it—should be no one’s fiscal priority ... especially conservatives’. ■

The American Conservative

Editors

Patrick J. Buchanan
Taki Theodoracopulos

Executive Editor

Scott McConnell

Managing Editor

Kara Hopkins

Film Critic

Steve Sailer

Staff Writer

Daniel McCarthy

Art Director

Mark Graef

Office Manager

Veronica Yanos

Publishing Consultant

Ronald E. Burr

Newsstand Consultant

Rande Davis

The American Conservative, Vol. 3, No. 4, March 1, 2004 (ISSN 1540-966X). Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. TAC is published 24 times per year, biweekly (except for double issues in January and August) for \$49.97 per year by The American Conservative, LLC, 1300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 120, Arlington VA, 22209. (703) 875-7600. Periodicals postage paid at Arlington, VA, and additional mailing offices. Printed in the United States of America. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 9030, Maple Shade, NJ 08052-9030.

Subscription rates: \$49.97 per year (24 issues) in the U.S., \$54.97 in Canada (U.S. funds), and \$69.97 other foreign (U.S. funds). Back issues: \$6.00 (prepaid) per copy in USA, \$7.00 in Canada (U.S. funds). **For subscription orders, payments, and other subscription inquiries**—by mail: *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 9030, Maple Shade, NJ 08052-9030. By phone: 800-579-6148 (outside the U.S./Canada call 856-488-5321). Via the web: www.amconmag.com. When ordering a subscription please allow 4–6 weeks for delivery of your first issue and all subscription transactions. This issue went to press on February 5, 2004. Copyright 2004 *The American Conservative*. Inquiries to the editor should be sent to letters@amconmag.com.

[neocon roadmap]

No End to War

The Frum-Perle prescription would ensnare America in endless conflict.

By Patrick J. Buchanan

ON THE DUST JACKET of his book, Richard Perle appends a *Washington Post* depiction of himself as the “intellectual guru of the hard-line neoconservative movement in foreign policy.”

The guru’s reputation, however, does not survive a reading. Indeed, on putting down Perle’s new book the thought recurs: the neoconservative moment may be over. For they are not only losing their hold on power, they are losing their grip on reality.

An End to Evil: How to Win the War on Terror opens on a note of hysteria. In the War on Terror, writes Perle, “There is no middle way for Americans: It is victory or holocaust.” “What is new since 9/11 is the chilling realization that the terrorist threat we thought we had contained” now menaces “our survival as a nation.”

But how is our survival as a nation menaced when not one American has died in a terrorist attack on U.S. soil since 9/11? Are we really in imminent peril of a holocaust like that visited upon the Jews of Poland?

“[A] radical strain within Islam,” says Perle, “... seeks to overthrow our civilization and remake the nations of the

West into Islamic societies, imposing on the whole world its religion and laws.”

Well, yes. Militant Islam has preached that since the 7th century. But what are the odds the Boys of Tora Bora are going to “overthrow our civilization” and coerce us all to start praying to Mecca five times a day?

In his own review of *An End to Evil*, Joshua Micah Marshall picks up this same scent of near-hysteria over the Islamic threat:

The book conveys a general sense that America is at war with Islam itself anywhere and everywhere: the contemporary Muslim world is depicted as one great cauldron of hate, murder, obscurantism, and deceit. If our Muslim adversaries are not to destroy Western civilization, we must gird for more battles.

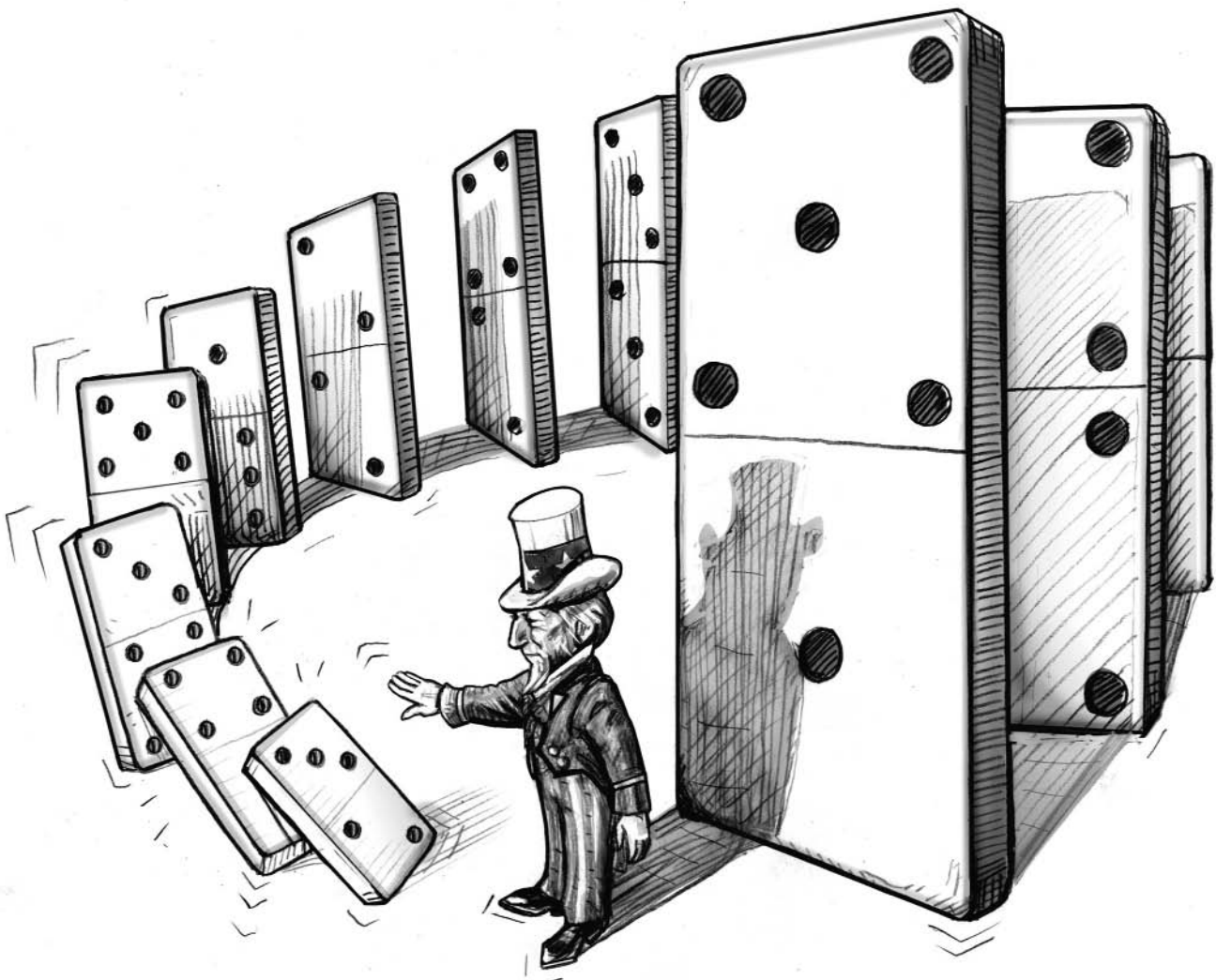
To suggest Frum and Perle are over the top is not to imply we not take seriously the threat of terror attacks on airliners, in malls, from dirty bombs, or, God forbid, a crude atomic device smuggled in by Ryder truck or container ship. Yet even this will never “overthrow our civilization.”

In the worst of terror attacks, we lost 3,000 people. Horrific. But at Antietam Creek, we lost 7,000 in a day’s battle in a nation that was one-ninth as populous. Three thousand men and boys perished every week for 200 weeks of that Civil War. We Americans did not curl up and die. We did not come all this way because we are made of sugar candy.

Germany and Japan suffered 3,000 dead every day in the last two years of World War II, with every city flattened and two blackened by atom bombs. Both came back in a decade. Is al-Qaeda capable of this sort of devastation when they are recruiting such scrub stock as Jose Padilla and the shoe bomber?

In the war we are in, our enemies are weak. That is why they resort to the weapon of the weak—terror. And, as in the Cold War, time is on America’s side. Perseverance and patience are called for, not this panic.

In 25 years, militant Islam has seized three countries: Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan. We toppled the Taliban almost without losing a man. Sudan is a failed state. In Iran, a generation has grown up that knows nothing of Savak or the Great Satan but enough about the mullahs to



have rejected them in back-to-back landslides. The Iranian Revolution has reached Thermidor. Wherever Islamism takes power, it fails. Like Marxism, it does not work.

Yet, assume it makes a comeback. So what? Taken together, all 22 Arab nations do not have the GDP of Spain. Without oil, their exports are the size of Finland's. Not one Arab nation can stand up to Israel, let alone the United States. The Islamic threat is not strategic, but demographic. If death comes to the West it will be because we embraced a culture of death—birth control, abortion, sterilization, euthanasia. Western man is dying as Islamic man migrates north to await his passing and inherit his estate.

Said young Lincoln in his Lyceum address, "If destruction be our lot, we

must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide."

In his first inaugural address, FDR admonished, "[T]he only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

Fear is what Perle and his co-author David Frum are peddling to stampede America into serial wars. Just such fear-mongering got us into Iraq, though, we have since discovered, Iraq had no hand in 9/11, no ties to al-Qaeda, no weapons of mass destruction, no nuclear program, and no plans to attack us. Iraq was never "the clear and present danger" the authors insist she was.

Calling their book a "manual for victory," they declaim:

For us, terrorism remains the great evil of our time, and the war against this evil, our generation's great cause. We do not believe that Americans are fighting this evil to minimize it or to manage it. We believe they are fighting to win—to end this evil before it kills again and on a genocidal scale. There is no middle way for Americans: It is victory or holocaust.

But no nation can "end evil." Evil has existed since Cain rose up against his brother Abel and slew him. A propensity to evil can be found in every human heart. And if God accepts the existence of evil, how do Frum and Perle propose to "end" it? Nor can any nation "win the war on terror." Terrorism is simply a term for the murder of non-combatants for political ends.

Revolutionary terror has been around for as long as this Republic. It was used by Robespierre's Committee on Public Safety and by People's Will in Romanov Russia. Terror has been the chosen weapon of anarchists, the IRA, Irgun, the Stern Gang, Algeria's FLN, the Mau Mau, MPLA, the PLO, Black September, the Basque ETA, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, Hamas, the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade, SWAPO, ZANU, ZAPU, the Tupamaros, Shining Path, FARC, the ANC, the V.C., the Huks, Chechen rebels, Tamil Tigers, and the FALN that attempted to assassinate Harry Truman and shot up the House floor in 1954, to name only a few.

Accused terrorists have won the Nobel Peace Prize: Begin, Arafat, Mandela. Three lie in mausoleums in the capitals of nations they created: Lenin, Mao, Ho. Others are the fathers of their countries like Ben Bella and Jomo Kenyatta. A terrorist of the Black Hand ignited World War I by assassinating the Archduke Ferdinand. Yet Gavrilo Princep has a bridge named for him in Sarajevo.

The murder of innocents for political

of state *against anyone, American or not*" [emphasis added].

Astonishing. The authors say America is responsible for defending everyone, everywhere from terror and deterring any and all regimes that might use terror—against anyone, anywhere on earth.

But there are 192 nations. Scores of regimes from Liberia to Congo to Cuba, from Zimbabwe to Syria to Uzbekistan, and from Iran to Sudan to the Afghan warlords of the Northern Alliance who fought on our side—have used torture and terror to punish enemies. Are we to fight them all?

Well, actually, no. Excepting North Korea, the authors' list of nations that need to be attacked reads as though it were drawn up in the Israeli Defense Ministry. By the second paragraph, Perle and Frum have given us a short list of priority targets: "The war on terror is not over, it has barely begun. Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, and Hamas still plot murder."

Now al-Qaeda was responsible for 9/11. But when did Hamas attack us? And if Israel can co-exist and negotiate with Hezbollah, why is it America's duty

troops out of Lebanon, hand over all terrorist suspects, end support for Hezbollah, stop agitating against Israel, and adopt a "Western orientation"—or you, too, get the Saddam treatment.

But what has Syria done to us? And if Assad balks do we bomb Damascus? Invade? Where do we get the troops? What if the Syrians, too, resort to guerrilla war?

Bush's father made Hafez al-Assad an ally in the Gulf War. Ehud Barak offered Assad 99.5 percent of the Golan Heights. Why, then, must Bashir Assad's regime be destroyed—by us?

"We don't have much time," say Frum and Perle. But what is Assad doing that warrants immediate attack? Is he, too, buying yellowcake from Niger?

Colonel Khaddafi is now paying billions in reparations for Pan Am 103, giving up his weapons of mass destruction, and inviting U.S. inspectors in to verify his disarmament. Why is it imperative we overthrow him?

While the Saudis have been diffident allies in the War on Terror, they are not America's enemies. They pumped oil to keep prices down in the first Gulf War. They looked the other way as U.S. fighter-bombers flew out of Prince Sultan Air Base in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Yet the Saudis are directed to provide us "with the utmost cooperation in the war on terror," or we will invade, detach their oil-rich eastern province, and occupy it.

But why? If the monarchy falls and bin Laden's acolytes replace it, how would that make us more secure in our own country?

What did Iran do to justify war against her? According to Perle and Frum,

Iran defied the Monroe Doctrine and sponsored murder in our own hemisphere, killing eighty-six people and wounding some three hundred at the Jewish community center in

EXCEPTING NORTH KOREA, THE AUTHORS' LIST OF NATIONS THAT NEED TO BE ATTACKED READS AS THOUGH IT WERE DRAWN UP IN THE ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTRY.

ends is evil, but to think we can "end" it is absurd. Cruel and amoral men, avaricious for power and "immortality," will always resort to it. For, all too often, it succeeds.

But what must America do to attain victory in her war on terror?

Say the authors: "We must hunt down the individual terrorists before they kill our people or *others* We must deter all regimes that use terror as a weapon

to destroy Hezbollah? Iran and North Korea, the authors warn, "present intolerable threats to American security. We must move boldly against them both and against all other sponsors of terrorism as well: Syria, Libya and Saudi Arabia. And we don't have much time."

"Why have we put up with [Syria] as long as we have?" the authors demand. They call for a cut-off of Syria's oil and an ultimatum to Assad: Get Syrian

Buenos Aires—and our government did worse than nothing: It opened negotiations with the murderers.

But that atrocity occurred a dozen years ago, long before the reform government of President Mohammad Khatami was elected. And if Iran was behind an attack on a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, why did Argentina and Israel not avenge these deaths? Why is retribution our responsibility? It was not Americans who were the victims, and the attack occurred 5,000 miles from the United States.

The Frum-Perle invocation of the Monroe Doctrine is both cynical and comical. If they were genuinely concerned about violations of the Monroe Doctrine, why did they not include Cuba on their target list, a “state sponsor of terror” 90 miles from our shores that has hosted Soviet missiles and, according to Undersecretary of State John Bolton, is developing chemical and biological weapons? Why did Saudi Arabia make the cut but not Cuba? Might it have something to do with proximity and propinquity?

For Iran, there can be no reprieve. “The regime must go,” say our authors, because Ayatollah Khamenei has

... no more right to control ... Iran than any other criminal has to seize control of the persons and property of others. It's not always in our power to do something about such criminals, nor is it always in our interest, but when it is in our power and interest, we should toss dictators aside with no more compunction than a police sharpshooter feels when he downs a hostage-taker.

But where in the Constitution is the president empowered to “toss dictators aside”? And if it took 150,000 U.S. sol-

diers to toss Saddam aside, how many troops do Frum and Perle think it will take to occupy the capital of a nation three times as large and populous and toss the ayatollah aside? How many dead and wounded would our war hawks consider an acceptable price for being rid of the mullahs?

As South Korea favors appeasement, they write, we must take the lead, demand that North Korea surrender all nuclear materials and shut down all missile sites. If Kim Jong Il balks, we should move U.S. troops back to safety beyond artillery and rocket range of the DMZ and launch preemptive strikes on known North Korean nuclear sites and impose a naval and air blockade. As for the South Koreans, they should probably brace themselves. “We have no doubt how such a war would end,” say the authors. They also had no doubt how the Iraqi war would end.

Is the Perle-Frum vision for the suffering people of North Korea a future of freedom and democracy? Not exactly:

It may be that the only way out of the decade-long crisis on the Korean peninsula is the toppling of Kim Jong Il and his replacement by a North Korean communist who is *more* subservient to China. If so, we should accept that outcome.

Swell. America is to fight a second Korean War that could entail a nuclear strike on our troops, but, when we have won, we should accept a communist North Korea that is a vassal of Beijing. How many dead and wounded are our AEI warlords willing to accept to make Pyongyang a puppet of Beijing?

But the Frum-Perle enemies' list is not complete. France, if she does not shape up, is to be treated as an enemy.

From every page of this book there oozes a sense of urgency that borders on the desperate for action this day: “We can feel the will to win ebbing in Wash-

ington, we sense the reversion to the bad old habits of complacency and denial.”

The neocons are not wrong here. With the cost of war at \$200 billion and rising, with deaths mounting, and with the possibility growing that Iraq could collapse in chaos and civil war, President Bush appears to be experiencing buyer's remorse about the lemon he was sold by Perle and friends.

They promised him a “cakewalk,” that we would be hailed as “liberators,” that democracy would take root in Iraq and flourish in the Middle East, that Palestinians and Israelis would break bread and make peace. With Lord Melbourne, Bush must be muttering, “What all the wise men promised has not happened, and what all the damn fools said would happen has come to pass.”

What do Perle and Frum see as our decisive failing in Iraq?

But of all our mistakes, probably the most serious was our unwillingness to allow the Iraqi National Congress, Iraq's leading anti-Saddam resistance movement, to form a provisional government after the fall of Baghdad. In 1944, we took care to let French troops enter Paris before U.S. or British forces. We should have shown equal tact in 2003.

Thus, we are in trouble because Ahmad Chalabi was not allowed to play de Gaulle leading his war-weary, battle-hardened Free Iraqis into Baghdad.

Why was Perle's protégé passed over? Because the “INC terrified the Saudis and therefore terrified those in our government who wished to placate the Saudis.” The damned Arabists at State did it again.

Hastily written, replete with errors, with no index, *An End to Evil* is a brief in defense of neoconservatives against their impending indictment on charges they lied us into a war that may prove

our greatest disaster since Vietnam. And the charge of deliberate deceit is not without merit.

In mid-December 2001, in a column distributed by Copley News, Perle asserted that Saddam "is busily at work on a nuclear weapon it's simply a matter of time before he acquires nuclear weapons."

Naming Khidir Hamza, "one of the people who ran the nuclear weapons program for Saddam," as his source, Perle gave credence to Hamza's tale of 400 uranium enrichment facilities spread all over Iraq. "Some of them look like farmhouses, some of them look like classrooms, some of them look like warehouses. You'll never find them." Only "preemptive action" can save us, said Perle.

By the end of 2001, according to Perle, the threat of a nuclear-armed Saddam was imminent:

With each passing day he comes closer to his dream of a nuclear arsenal. We know he has a clandestine program, spread over many hidden sites, to enrich natural uranium to weapons grade And intelligence sources know he is in the market, with plenty of money, for both weapons material and components as well as finished nuclear weapons. How close is he? We do not know. Two years, three years, tomorrow even?

When he wrote this, Perle, as chairman of the Defense Policy Board, had access to secret intelligence. So the question cannot be evaded: did Hamza deliberately deceive Perle, or did Perle deliberately deceive us?

For those unpersuaded that Saddam was a strategic threat, there were his links to the 9/11 massacre. Saddam's "collaboration with terrorism is well documented," wrote Perle, "Evidence of a meeting in Prague between a senior

Iraqi intelligence agent and Mohamed Atta, the September 11 ringleader, is convincing."

Thus did the neocons get the war they wanted. And after America fought the war for which they had beaten the drums, how do Perle & Co. explain why it did not turn out as they assured us it would?

THE NEOCON MOMENT MAY BE PASSING. RATHER THAN LOOKING FOR NEW WARS, BUSH AND RUMSFELD SEEM TO BE LOOKING FOR THE NEXT EXIT RAMP OUT OF OUR MESOPOTAMIAN MORASS.

Answer: any disaster in Iraq, the authors argue, will be due to the venality and cowardice of the State Department, CIA, FBI, retired generals, and ex-ambassadors bought off by the Saudis. "We have offered concrete recommendations equal to the seriousness of the threat, and the softliners have not, because we have wanted to fight and they have not."

Which brings us back to the point made at the outset: the neocon moment may be passing, for they appear to be losing their grip on reality as well as their influence on policy. Rather than looking for new wars to involve us more deeply in the Middle East, Bush and Rumsfeld seem to be looking for the next exit ramp out of our Mesopotamian morass. "No war in '04" is said to be the watchword of Karl Rove.

Moreover, Americans are coming to appreciate that, all that bombast about "unipolar" moments and "American empire" aside, there are limits to American power, and we are approaching them. U.S. ground forces of 480,000 are stretched thin. There is grumbling in Army, Reserve, and National Guard units about too many tours too far from home. Backing off his "axis-of-evil" rhet-

oric, Bush said in this year's State of the Union, "We have no desire to dominate, no ambitions of empire."

The long retreat of American empire has begun.

In Washington, there are rumors of the return of James Baker and the imminent departure of Paul Wolfowitz. As Frederick the Great, weary of the antics

and speculations of his house guest Voltaire, said, "One squeezes the orange and throws away the rind."

Moreover, the radicalism of their schemes for two, three, many wars, seems, given our embroilment in Iraq, not only rash but also rooted in unreality. Before Bush could take us to war with any of these regimes, he would have to convince his country of the necessity of war and persuade Congress to grant him the power to go to war. Yet absent a new atrocity on the magnitude of 9/11, directly traceable to one of the regimes on the Perle-Frum list, the president could not win this authority. Nor does it appear he intends to try. And were the United States to attack Libya, Syria, or Saudi Arabia, we would alienate every ally in the Islamic world and Europe—including Tony Blair's Britain. To fight these wars and occupy these nations would bleed our armed forces and mandate a return to the draft. But how would any of these wars make us more secure from terrorism here at home?

Indeed, it is because Americans cannot see the correlation between the wars the authors demand and security at home that Frum and Perle must resort

to fear-mongering about holocausts, the end of civilization, and our demise as a nation.

If it is America we defend, *An End to Evil* makes no sense. The Perle-Frum prescription for permanent war makes sense only if it is the mission of the armed forces of the United States to make the Middle East safe for Sharon—and here we come to the heart of the quarrel between us.

On Sept. 11, al-Qaeda attacked us. Al-Qaeda is our enemy, not Syria, Libya, or Saudi Arabia. And the way to cut off al-Qaeda and kill it is to isolate it from all Arab and Islamic nations and centers of power including Syria, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.

None of these nations had a hand in 9/11. All have a vital interest in not being linked to an al-Qaeda for whom an enraged superpower is on the mortal hunt. Thus, no matter the character of these regimes, we have interests in common. And if Bush can use carrots to get Bashir Assad to help us find and finish al-Qaeda—as his father got Assad's father to help us expel Iraq from Kuwait—let us make Syria an ally rather than another enemy of the United States.

But here is the rub: The neocons do not want to narrow our list of enemies. They do not want to confine America's war to those who attacked us. They want to expand our list of enemies to include Israel's enemies. They want to escalate and widen what Chris Matthews calls "the Firemen's War" into a war for hegemony in the Middle East. They had hoped to exploit 9/11 to erect an empire, and as they see the vision vanish, their desperation knows no bounds.

That great American military mind Col. John Boyd once described strategy as appending to yourself as many centers of power as possible and isolating your enemy from as many centers of power as possible.

This was the strategy used by Bush I in the Gulf War. He persuaded Russia and China to sign on in the Security Council, Germany and Japan to finance his war, Syria and Egypt to send soldiers, Britain and France to help us fight it. By giving everyone a stake in an American victory—call it imperial bribery, if you will—Bush I lined up the world against Iraq. As did George W. Bush, brilliantly, in Afghanistan.

But what Frum and Perle are pressing on him now is an altogether opposite strategy. They want Bush to expand the war, broaden the theater of operations, multiply our enemies, and ignore our allies. If Bush should adopt this strategy, it would be America and Israel against the Arab and Islamic world with Europe neutral and almost all of Asia rooting for our humiliation.

Let it be said: it is vital to victory over al-Qaeda, to the security of our country, the safety of our people, and our broader interests in an Arab and Islamic world of 57 nations that stretches from Morocco

There is no vital U.S. interest in whose flag flies over the Golan or East Jerusalem, when Barak was willing to give up both. But if we allow the neo-conservatives to morph our war on al-Qaeda into Israel's war for Palestine, our war will never end. And that is the hidden agenda of the neoconservatives: permanent war for their permanent empowerment. As Frum and Perle concede, this is "our generation's great cause."

"Who are those guys?" Butch and Sundance asked. Indeed, who are these men who would plunge our country into serial wars of preemption and retribution across the arc of crisis from Libya to Korea?

Frum is not even an American. He is a Canadian who did not become a citizen until offered a job in the Bush speech-writing shop. He was cashiered after one year when his wife bragged on the Internet that David invented the "axis-of-evil" phrase. Expelled from the White House, Frum ratted out his old colleagues in a

IT IS VITAL TO **VICTORY OVER AL-QAEDA**, THE SECURITY OF OUR COUNTRY, AND THE SAFETY OF OUR PEOPLE THAT WE **NOT LET THE NEOCONS CONFLATE OUR WAR ON TERROR WITH THEIR WAR FOR HEGEMONY.**

to Malaysia that we not let the neocons conflate our war on terror with their war for hegemony.

Neocons believe the Palestinian Authority must be crushed, Arafat eliminated, and the Golan Heights, West Bank, and East Jerusalem held by Israel forever. They want Hezbollah eradicated, Syria denatured, the Saudi monarchy brought down. Let them so believe. But their agenda is not America's agenda, and their fight is not America's fight.

"hot" book and got himself hired by *National Review*, where he produced a cover story about a dirty dozen "Unpatriotic Conservatives" who hate neocons, hate Bush, hate the GOP, hate America, and "wish to see the United States defeated in the War on Terror."

Frum ordered all 12 purged from the conservative movement. (And we must, in fairness, report that all three editors of this magazine and four regular writers were among the 12 who went to the stake.)

Who is Perle? Unlike Frum, a cipher on foreign policy, Perle has been a serious player since the Nixon era. But throughout those years he has betrayed a passionate attachment to a foreign power. In 1996, Perle co-authored "A Clean Break," a now-famous paper urging Benjamin Netanyahu to dump the Oslo Accords, seize the West Bank, and confront Syria. The road to Damascus lies through Baghdad, Perle told the receptive Israeli Prime Minister.

Then an adviser to Republican candidate Robert Dole, Perle was thus secretly urging a foreign government to abrogate a peace accord supported by his own government. In 1998, he and other neoconservatives signed a letter to then President Clinton urging the United States to initiate all-out war on Iraq and pledging neoconservative support if Clinton would launch it.

Query: why is Perle permitted to retain his post at the Department of Defense while agitating for wars on four or five countries, including Saudi Arabia, a friend of the United States? Why does President Bush put up with this? His father would never have tolerated it.

The neocons have also begun to injure their reputations and isolate themselves with the nastiness and irrationality of their attacks. French cannon once bore the inscription *ultima ratio regum*, the last argument of kings. The toxic charge of "Anti-Semite!" has become the last argument of the neocons. But they have wheeled out that cannon too many times. People are less intimidated now. They have seen men look into its muzzle and walk away.

Gen. Anthony Zinni, former head of Centcom, is a hero of Vietnam. He opposed war with Iraq, arguing that the U.S. military was overstretched and we would unleash forces we could not control. In an interview, Zinni related his astonishment at the vapidity of the Wol-

fowitz clique with which he had to deal at the Department of Defense:

The more I saw, the more I thought that this [war] was the product of the neocons who didn't understand the region and were going to create havoc there. These were diletantes from Washington think tanks who never had had an idea that worked on the ground I don't know where the neocons came from—that was not the platform [Bush and Cheney] ran on Somehow, the neocons captured the president. They captured the vice president.

National Review's response was to brand Zinni an anti-Semite. In a separate column, *NR* regular Joel Mowbray not only accused the general of having "blamed the Jews," he insisted that the term neocon, in common usage for 25 years, is now an anti-Semitic code word for Jews:

Neither President Bush nor Vice-President Cheney ... was to blame. It was the Jews. They captured both Bush and Cheney Technically, the former head of the Central Command in the Middle East didn't say 'Jews.' He instead used a term that has become a new favorite for anti-Semites: 'neoconservatives.'

Mowbray and *National Review* thus slandered a brave and brilliant soldier who has bled for his country. Such slanders do the neocons no good but only add to their isolation and the burgeoning detestation of their tactics.

New York Times columnist David Brooks has also begun to smear critics of the neocons as anti-Semites. In the word "neocon," he writes, the "con" stands for conservative and the "neo" stands for Jewish.

But the problem for neocons is not that so many are Jewish, but that so few are conservative. Lawrence Kaplan, a Perle colleague who co-authored a book with William Kristol, after reading *An End to Evil*, declared: "This is not conservatism. It is liberalism, with very sharp teeth."

If the neocons purport to see ethnic hatred in everyone else's motives, is it unfair to explore for an ethnic affinity in their own? Why does every grand strategy neocons advance, from "American empire" to "benevolent global hegemony" to "a *Pax Americana*" to "world democratic revolution" have as its centerpiece solidarity with Sharon and a vigorous wielding of American power against all the enemies of Israel?

Why is every peace plan proposed or endorsed by a president to give the Palestinians a home of their own—the Rogers Plan, the Oslo accords, Camp David, the Taba Plan, the Saudi Plan, the Mitchell Plan, the Road Map—a Munich sellout? Why is any American patriot, who demands that Ariel Sharon stop building settlements on Palestinian land and walling off Jerusalem, a State Department Arabist, a pawn of the Texas oil lobby, a Coughlinite, an anti-Semite, or a bought-and-paid-for lick-spittle of the Saudis?

The United States remains committed morally and politically to the security and survival of Israel and to providing her with the weaponry to guarantee it. No president is going to back off that commitment. But because Israel is a friend does not mean that the Sharonites have preemptive absolution to settle or seize Arab lands or permanently to deny Arab peoples the rights we preach to the world. In our own national interests, we must say so—in the clear.

This is a time for truth. With a mighty and hostile Soviet Empire no longer militarily present in the Maghreb and Middle East, U.S. and Israeli strategic interests

have ceased to coincide. And with nightly pictures of Palestinian suffering on Al Jazeera, they have begun to collide.

Thus between traditional conservatives and neoconservatives a breach has been opened and an irreconcilable conflict has arisen. We of the Old Right only have one country. We believe U.S. foreign policy must be determined by what is best for America. And what is best for America is what our forefathers taught: If you would preserve this Republic, stay out of foreign wars, avoid "permanent alliances," beware of "passionate attachments" to nations not your own.

In 1778, Washington rejoiced in the alliance with France. But when victory was won, that alliance became an entanglement that could drag the Republic into Europe's wars. American statesmen who had celebrated the French alliance now sought to sever it, and, under Adams, succeeded.

With the end of the Cold War, an alliance with Israel has ceased to be central to U.S. interests. Indeed, our reputation as armorers and allies of Israel only damages us as Sharon rampages through the West Bank and Gaza walling off Arab land and denying to Palestinians that very right of self-determination we Americans espouse. Sharon is making hypocrites of us, and we are cowards for permitting it.

To the neocons, however, Zionism is second nature. They cannot conceive of a foreign policy that is good for America that does not entail absolute solidarity with Israel. They are dangerously close to imbibing the poisonous brew that drove Jonathan Pollard to treason: If it is good for Israel, it cannot be bad for America.

To evade admission of the transparent truth, neocons have begun to rationalize their passionate attachment, to sublimate it. "The Arab-Israeli quarrel is not a *cause* of Islamic extremism," Frum and Perle protest.

But when every returning journalist and diplomat and every opinion survey says it is America's uncritical support for Israeli repression of the Palestinians that makes us hated in the region, how

WHAT IS BEST FOR AMERICA IS WHAT **OUR FOREFATHERS TAUGHT: IF YOU WOULD PRESERVE THIS REPUBLIC, STAY OUT OF FOREIGN WARS, AVOID "PERMANENT ALLIANCES," BEWARE OF "PASSIONATE ATTACHMENTS."**

can honest men write this? Have they blinded themselves to the truth because it is too painful?

We stand by Israel, writes Irving Kristol, because America is an "ideological" nation, "like the Soviet Union of yesteryear." We and Israel are democracies, the Arab countries are not, and that is all there is to it.

That is why it was in our national interest to come to the defense of France and Britain in World War II. That is why we feel it necessary to defend Israel today, when its survival is threatened. No complicated geopolitical calculations of national interest are necessary.

But this is nonsense, and Kristol knows it. When Britain and France declared war on Hitler on September 3, 1939, FDR did not "come to the defense of France and Britain." He delivered a fireside chat that night promising the nation America would stay out. There will be "no blackout of peace" here, FDR promised us.

When France fell in May-June of 1940, pleading for planes, FDR sent words of encouragement. Not until 18 months after the fall of France did we declare war on Hitler and not until after Hitler declared war on us. Thus, we did not go to war to defend democracy in Britain or France. We went to war to smash the Japanese Empire that attacked us at

Pearl Harbor. Kristol is parroting liberal myths.

In the Cold War the United States welcomed as allies Chiang Kai-shek, Salazar, Franco, Somoza, the Shah, Suharto, Syn-

gman Rhee, Park Chung Hee and the Korean generals, Greek colonels, military regimes in Brazil, Argentina, and Turkey, Marcos, and Pinochet because these autocrats proved far more reliable than democratists like Nehru, Olaf Palme, Willy Brandt, and Pierre Trudeau. When it comes to wars that threaten us, hot or cold, we Americans are at one with Nietzsche, "A state, it is the coldest of all cold monsters."

India is democratic and 200 times the size of Israel. Yet in India's wars with Pakistan, we tilted toward Pakistan. Why? Because the Pakistanis were allies, and India sided with Moscow. That India was democratic and Pakistan autocratic made no difference to us.

As for Israel, has America really given her \$100 billion and taken her side in every Arab quarrel because she is a democracy?

Tell it to Tony Judt. When this British historian proposed—given the impossibility of separating Arabs from Jews on the West Bank—that Israel annex the West Bank, become a bi-national state, and give Palestinians equal rights, neocons went berserk.

Frum called Judt's idea "genocidal liberalism" that would leave Jews exposed to slaughter. John Podhoretz declared it "unthinkable" and "the definition of intellectual corruption." "[H]aughty and ugly," said the *New Republic*, which hurled Judt from its masthead.

But if the just solution to the South African problem was to abolish bantustans and create a one-man, one-vote democracy, why is that not even a debatable solution to the Palestinian problem?

In temperament, too, neoconservatives have revealed themselves as the antithesis of conservative. In the depiction of scholar Claes Ryn, they are the “neo-Jacobins” of modernity whose dominant trait is conceit.

Only great conceit could inspire a dream of armed world hegemony. The ideology of benevolent American empire and global democracy dresses up as a voracious appetite for power. It signifies the ascent to power of the new kind of American, one profoundly at odds with that older type who aspired to modesty and self-restraint.

The Perle-Frum book is marinated in conceit, which may prove the neocons’ fatal flaw. In the run-up to the invasion, when critics were exposing their plotting for war long before 9/11, the neocons did not bother to deny it. They reveled in it. They boasted about who they were, where they came from, what they believed, how they were different, and how they had become the new elite. With Rumsfeld, Cheney and Bush marching to their war drums, one of them bellowed, “We are all neoconservatives now!”

But it is always unwise of courtiers to boast of their influence with the prince. And now the neocons have outed themselves. We all know who they are. We all have the coordinates. We all have them bracketed.

With the heady days of the fall of Baghdad behind us and our country ensnared in a Lebanon of our own, neocons seem fearful that it is they who will be made to take the fall if it all turns out badly in Iraq, as McNamara and his Whiz Kids had to take the fall for Vietnam.

And this one they’ve got right. ■

President Moonbeam’s Wild Ride

Bush’s reach exceeds his grasp.

By Martin Sieff

FRESH FROM SOLVING all the problems of illegal Mexican immigration into the United States by a single stroke only days before, President George W. Bush—with a single bound—put America back into space, permanently on the Moon and first to Mars.

Well, maybe not.

The first thing to be said about the president’s grand vision is that it is a pure fantasy. If it ever happens, it will be because later American leaders and scores of millions of people labor and sweat to make it a reality. For now, the Bush plan to land U.S. astronauts on Mars and create a lunar base is as little rooted in reality as his ability to bring pro-American peace, prosperity, and democracy to Iraq.

Bush has given the job for the most ambitious space program any nation has ever declared to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), a strange choice indeed for a supposedly free-market championing, government-reducing conservative president. For NASA is one of the last of the bureaucratic monoliths of the ’60s and ’70s so beloved of Lyndon Johnson, whose particular favorite it was, and Jimmy Carter. In 17 years, it has killed 14 astronauts on two shuttles through catastrophically sloppy risk assessment, more than the total dead of every other space program on earth combined. And it has miserably failed in every manned mission it has

attempted in more than a quarter of a century in terms of objectives achieved, regularity of launch, and, most of all, cost estimates. If you are a stockholder in Lockheed Martin or Boeing, sing hosannas of praise for Bush’s vision. Otherwise, run to the nearest bathroom and retch.

Bush admits in the small print and between the lines of his grandiose vision that it is a con. His supposedly “visionary” and “generous” call for other space-faring nations like France, Japan, and Russia to join in this Heavenly Great Crusade is actually a desperate cry for help. For right now, and for probably at least a decade to come, the United States will have the greatest difficulty just putting astronauts 200 miles up into space, where the shuttles used to fly and where that cosmic white elephant called the International Space Station still forlornly floats. As for going a quarter of a million miles to the Moon or the 100 million or so miles to Mars, as Tony Soprano would say, “Fuggedababoutit.”

NASA not only does not have manned booster rockets capable of blasting U.S. astronauts to the Moon (or, without the shuttle, even into low-earth orbit, for that matter), it does not even have any plans to build them. The debate about what to do to replace the shuttle has been mired for years, decades even, in cliquish committees. Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and their

shrinking ilk of aerospace firms continue to draw fat consulting fees for such boondoggles, but nothing actually gets built.

China, by contrast, has already designed and is building its advanced Long March 5 booster, which may propel three Chinese taikonauts around the Moon as early as the summer of 2008 to celebrate the Beijing Olympics. And it already has a space craft capable of lunar circumnavigation in its tried and trusted Shenzhou capsule that carried Col. Yang Liwei into orbit and back safely last October. The Shenzhou is big enough to carry three taikonauts, and the provisions and air they would need around the Moon and back, and it has state-of-the-art solar array energy collectors to power the trip.

More importantly, China now has, by its official announcement, a space-industrial complex of at least 3,000 factories providing the industrial muscle to make its space ambitions real. By contrast, America's industrial infrastructure has been ravaged over the past 30 years, and there is no end in sight.

It gets better for the Chinese and even worse for us. Long March 5 is an easy technological development for Beijing because it is an incremental, evolutionary advance on the existing and successful Long March 2 boosters such as the one that propelled Col. Yang into orbit. And the Long March itself is an adaptation and upgrade of Russia's Proton booster, the most reliable space workhorse of the past quarter-century.

By contrast, even in its brief 1960s Golden Age, U.S. space engineering and rocketry disdained the ideas of gradual evolution that served Boeing so well for so long in its strategic bomber and commercial airliner programs. The fabled Saturn V that propelled the Apollo spacecraft to the Moon was a huge technological leap forward from anything even the U.S. space program had built before.

In those days, America's aerospace engineers routinely pulled off that kind of engineering wonder whenever they were called to. But the glorious new virtual economy of the past 20 years is not capable of it. The steelmaking, auto-engine producing aerospace competition base simply does not exist anymore. We cannot even rebuild Saturn V because NASA has lost too many of the original plans.

And remember, the last time we tried such a bold conceptual leap into a new generation of unproven space technology we got: the shuttle. And look where that landed us.

This means we will have to depend on the good graces of the French or the Russians to propel us back to the Moon so that they do all the real hard work while we still get the glory. And how likely is

with the current dollar-per-pound costs of propelling payloads into orbit, would cost \$200 billion and a single manned Mars Mission—even on budget—would likely come to \$410 billion. This is considerably more than the \$12 billion initial price tag Bush so soothingly offered to launch his vision.

But then this is a president who inherited a \$150 billion annual federal budget surplus, the best in more than 30 years, and within three years turned it into a \$455 billion deficit. How to have a colony on the Moon, a trip to Mars, unchecked spending, and trillions of dollars in tax cuts as well? Keep dreaming, President Moonbeam.

Bill Lind of the Free Congress Foundation is fond of citing the precedent of the rulers of enfeebled imperial Spain in the mid-17th century, who struggled to regain

WE CANNOT EVEN REBUILD SATURN V BECAUSE NASA HAS LOST TOO MANY OF THE ORIGINAL PLANS.

that going to be, given the brilliant diplomacy with which the Bush administration has consistently respected and cooperated with both countries?

Even if somehow the new rockets get designed, and they work, and NASA and its *famiglia* of fat-cat defense contractors builds them for the first time in a generation on time and on budget—bearing in mind that every NASA budget projection for the space station and the shuttle programs over the past 25 years has contained more fantasy than Tolkien—another not inconsiderable problem remains. How are we going to pay for it?

Gregg Easterbrook notes in the Feb. 2 *New Republic* that the current cost of even the anemic, low-earth orbit International Space Station is \$100 billion. He estimates that Bush's Moon base alone,

their power and glory by conquering the Baltic Sea. Alas, it never actually happened because their navy could not even make it through the English Channel to get there: the Dutch were in the way.

Bush's Moon and Mars vision is of an even greater magnitude of fantasy. It sounds absolutely wonderful—if we had the money, the rockets, the engineers, the industrial base, and the phalanx of competing, lean and innovative, reasonably sized aerospace companies that we did in the '50s and '60s. But we don't. Not any more. And thanks to the policies that this administration continues to follow, we're not likely to any time soon. ■

Martin Sieff is Chief International Analyst for United Press International.

[who would be free]

Spread Democracy—at Home

Before remaking the world, Americans should check the state of their own liberties.

By Fred Reed

WHILE THE UNITED STATES is freer and more democratic than many countries, it is neither as free nor as democratic as we are expected to believe, and is becoming rapidly less so. Indeed, we seem to be specialists in maintaining the appearance without having the substance. Regarding the techniques of which, a few thoughts:

(1) Free speech does not exist in America. We all know what we can't say and about whom we can't say it.

(2) A democracy run by two barely distinguishable parties is not, in fact, a democracy.

A parliamentary democracy allows expression of a range of points of view: an ecological candidate may be elected along with a communist, a racial-separatist, and a libertarian. These will make sure that their ideas are at least heard. By contrast, the two-party system prevents expression of any ideas the two parties agree to suppress. How much open discussion do you hear during presidential elections of, for example, race, immigration, abortion, gun control, and the continuing abolition of Christianity? These are the issues most important to most people, yet they are quashed.

The elections do, however, allow the public a sense of democratic participation while having the political impor-

tance of the Super Bowl. That is, elections serve chiefly to keep the people from noticing the absence of democracy. This is a remarkable concept, of great governmental utility.

(3) Large jurisdictions discourage autonomy. If, say, educational policy were set in small jurisdictions, such as towns or counties, a parent could but-thonhole the mayor and have a reasonable prospect of influencing his children's schools. If policy is set at the level of the state, then to change it that parent has to quit his job, marshal a vast expensive campaign, and organize committees in dozens of towns. It isn't practical. In

the federal Department of Education from Wyoming. Its employees are anonymous, salaried, unaccountable, can't be fired, and don't care about you. Many more of them than you might believe are affirmative-action hires and probably can't spell "Wyoming." You cannot influence them in the slightest. Yet they influence you.

(5) For our increasingly centralized and arbitrary government, the elimination of potentially competitive centers of power has been, and is, crucial. This is one reason for the aforementioned defanging of the churches: the faithful recognize a power above that of the

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America, local jurisdictions set taxes on real estate and determine parking policy. Everything of importance is decided remotely.

(4) Huge unresponsive bureaucracies somewhere else serve as political flywheels, insulating elected officials from the whims of the populace. Try calling

state, which they might choose to obey instead of Washington. The Catholic Church in particular, with its inherent organization, was once powerful. It has been brought to heel.

Similarly the elimination of states' rights, now practically complete, put paid to another potential source of

opposition. Industry, politically potent in the days of J.P. Morgan, has been tamed by regulation and federal contracts. The military in the United States has never been politically active. The government becomes the only game available—and is determined to remain so. Any attempt to weaken the central power will arouse implacable hostility.

For example, the persecution of those engaged in home-schooling has nothing to do with concern for the young. The public schools have little interest in education and for the most part seem to have little idea what it is. The opposition to home-schooling is simply the response of those with a monopoly of power to the specter of superior competition.

(6) Paradoxically, increasing the power of groups who cannot threaten the government strengthens the government: they serve as counterbalances to those who might challenge the central authority.

For example, the white- and male-dominated culture of the United States, while not embodied in an identifiable organization, for some time remained strong. The encouragement of dissension by empowerment of blacks, feminists, and homosexuals, and the importing of inassimilable minorities, weakens what was once the cultural mainstream.

(7) The apparent government isn't the real government. The real power in America resides in what George Will once called the "permanent political class," of which the formal government is a subset. It consists of the professorate, journalists, politicians, revolving appointees, high-level bureaucrats and so on, who slosh in and out of formal power. Most are unelected, believe the same things, and share a lack of respect for views other than their own.

It is they, to continue the example of education, who write the textbooks your children use, determine how history will be rewritten, and set academic

standards—all without the least regard for you. You can do nothing about it.

(8) The U.S. government consists of five branches that are, in rough order of importance, the Supreme Court, the media, the presidency, the bureaucracy, and Congress.

The function of the Supreme Court, which is both unanswerable and unaccountable, is to impose things that the

restaurants, in living rooms and on long flights. It is the national babysitter. For hours a day most Americans watch it.

Perhaps the key to cultural control is that people cannot not watch a screen. It is probably true that stupid people would not watch intelligent television, but it is certainly true that intelligent people will watch stupid television. Any television, it seems, is preferable to no

PEOPLE CAN RESIST ADMONITION. BUT IF THEY SEE SOMETHING HAPPENING OVER AND OVER, MONTH AFTER MONTH, IF THEY SEE THE SAME VALUES APPROVINGLY PORTRAYED, THEY WILL ADOPT BOTH BEHAVIOR AND VALUES.

Congress fears to touch. That is, it establishes programs desired by the ruling political class that could not possibly be democratically enacted. While formally a judicial organ, the Court is in reality our Ministry of Culture and Morals. It determines policy regarding racial integration, abortion, pornography, immigration, the practice of religion, which groups receive special privilege, and what forms of speech shall be punished.

(9) The media have two governmental purposes. The first is to prevent discussion and, to the extent possible, knowledge of taboo subjects. The second is to inculcate, by endless indirection, the values and beliefs of the permanent political class. Thus, for example, racial atrocities committed by whites against blacks are widely reported, while those committed by blacks against whites are concealed. Most people know this at least dimly. Few know the degree of management of information.

(10) Control of television conveys control of the society. It is magic. This is such a truism that we do not always see how true it is. The box is ubiquitous and inescapable. It babbles at us in bars and

television. As people read less, the lobotomy box acquires semi-exclusive rights to their minds.

Television doesn't tell people what to do. It shows them. People can resist admonition. But if they see something happening over and over, month after month, if they see the same values approvingly portrayed, they will adopt both behavior and values. It takes years, but it works. To be sure it works, we put our children in front of the screen from infancy.

(11) People can be free only to the extent that they are independent.

(12) Finally, people do not want freedom. They want comfort, 200 channels on the cable, sex, drugs, rock-and-roll, an easy job, and an SUV. No country with really elaborate home-theater has ever risen in revolt.

An awful lot of people secretly like being told what to do. We would probably be happier with a king. ■

Fred Reed's writing has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Harper's, and National Review, among other places.

A Few Good Voters

Despite Iraq, the military is still reliably Republican.

By Daniel McCarthy

IN THE WEEKS leading up to Saddam Hussein's capture many in the press began to predict that President Bush might be in danger of losing the support of voters in the military. Stories ran in the *Washington Monthly*, *Salon.com*, *Business Week*, and elsewhere cataloging the armed forces' growing discontentment with the administration: the stop-loss orders retaining personnel who were due to leave the services, the extended deployment of reservists and National Guards accustomed to serving one weekend a month, and the litany of criticisms coming from retired officers blasting the administration's Iraq policy—retired Gen. Anthony Zinni, for example, called the whole thing a “brain fart.” All of this, taken together, suggested that Iraq might be on the verge of doing to the Republican Party what Vietnam had done to the Democrats.

Fewer such stories have appeared since the deposed Iraqi leader was pulled out of his hole in the ground last December. Even before that, however, there was little real chance of Bush losing the affections of the nation's men and women under arms. The Military Times company—publisher of the *Army Times* and other newspapers for each of the services—surveyed its active-duty readership between Nov. 3 and Dec. 17, providing a rare insight into political opinion within the military. The study found that 67 percent of servicemen and women generally approved of the president's job performance. 57 percent identified themselves as Republicans; 53 per-

cent said they were either conservative or very conservative. By contrast, only 13 percent were Democrats, and just 7 percent called themselves liberal or very liberal. Despite the strain the Iraq war has imposed on the services, the military remains a Republican stronghold.

But Iraq *has* been a strain, the poll found. Fewer respondents approved of the president's handling of Iraq—56 percent—than approved of his overall performance as president. And an overwhelming 77 percent agreed or strongly agreed when asked whether today's military is stretched too thin to be effective. In light of such sentiments, Peter Feaver, a political science professor at Duke University who studies the military, says that Bush may not have as tight of a lock on the armed forces' vote in 2004 as he did in 2000. “The war on Iraq has been mixed enough that it dampens some of the one-sided positive evaluations that Bush would get, but it hasn't been such a negative that it's like the Vietnam War,” he says.

The military vote is small but significant. In 2000, it made a president. George W. Bush won the Florida recount by 537 votes. He picked up a net gain of 739 votes in that state from overseas absentee ballots, most of which are sure to have come from military personnel. Barring an exact reprise of the 2000 deadlock, there is little chance that the military vote's direct effect on the race this year will be so dramatic. But it has a larger importance out of proportion to its electoral weight. For one thing, other, larger segments of the

voting public look to the military's relationship with the two major political parties before casting their own ballots. These groups include veterans, of whom there are some 27 million, and an even larger number of “national security voters” without any military experience, but for whom defense is the paramount issue at the polls.

Taking notice of these demographics, Democrats across the country have lately sought to burnish their credentials on military issues, usually to little effect. In 2002, Democrat Bill McBride, running for governor of Florida, campaigned aggressively on his background as a veteran, only to lose in a landslide to Jeb Bush. That same year in Georgia, Democratic Sen. Max Cleland, a decorated veteran, lost the endorsement of the Veterans of Foreign Wars—as well as the election—to Republican challenger Saxby Chambliss. This year, of the top contenders for the Democratic presidential nomination, Sen. John Kerry and retired Gen. Wesley K. Clark both have considerable military experience, although in General Clark's case his appeal to the uniformed services may be qualified by his icy relations with many of his past colleagues.

But whether or not the Democrats can deprive President Bush of any significant portion of the military vote this year may depend less on what they do than on what missteps the president makes. There are plenty of opportunities for those. In going to war with Iraq, the president has created a political

minefield for himself so far as the military goes. Swelling casualty counts—over 2,800 American servicemen so far have been wounded in the ongoing conflict—threaten to overwhelm military and Veterans Administration hospitals already facing a budget crunch. To offset some of medical system's costs, the Bush administration is considering raising the fees that military retirees pay for prescription drugs through Tricare, the uniformed services' health insurance program, and instituting new fees for drugs retirees obtain at military hospitals and clinics. It is a tremendously unpopular idea. According to Knight Ridder Tribune News Services, the prospect prompted the Military Officers Association of America to send a "special report" to its 390,000 members warning them that "... the administration seems to continue going out of its way to penalize the military community."

Another problem for President Bush arising from the Iraq conflict is the matter of re-employment rights for National Guards and reservists returning from Iraq; some of them have been away from their civilian jobs for over a year. The administration has yet to enact regulations to implement the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Act (USERRA) of 1994, which the Clinton administration similarly failed to do.

Retired Rear Adm. James Carey, who broadly supports the president's policy in Iraq, is appalled by this foot-dragging. "I can understand why the Clinton administration sat on this for six years," he says, "just because of their general outlook on matters military. I can't believe that the Bush administration, which has had three years to get this done, hasn't done it. It's not that they haven't said they'd do it, but they've now missed three or four deadlines." Carey heads the National Defense Committee, a military-issues advocacy group that plans to make USERRA regulations its top priority in 2004.

President Bush has faced little criticism from within the active-duty military over the conduct of the Iraq campaign itself, however. There have indeed been complaints, especially from the Army, but they are more often directed against Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld than the president. By some accounts, Rumsfeld is the most disliked defense secretary among the officers' corps since Robert McNamara.

Richard Kohn, a professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and former Chief Historian of the Air Force, attributes much of the hostility toward Rumsfeld to such things as "his tampering with strategy, his refusal to admit that the military is overstretched, the slowness with which he responds to certain problems, like the reserve-Guard and reserve-active-duty mix, [and] his enthusiasm for certain weapons systems and units like special forces." Even more than his stubbornness and penchant for micro-management, however, Kohn thinks that Rumsfeld's attitude contributes to his difficult relationship with the officer corps. "He's

suffered serious erosion during the Clinton era, when partisan and ideological differences between the armed forces and their commander-in-chief led to very public disputes over the status of gays in the military and other issues, and saw some junior officers speak with open contempt for the president. As a philanderer, draft-dodger, apparent drug user, and habitual prevaricator, Clinton looked to many in the armed forces like the embodiment of everything they abhorred in the political Left. The man, as well as his policies, proved to be more than the officers were willing to tolerate, according to Kohn. "[I]t just triggered some kind of psychic break, and I think it led to an outburst of improper and unprofessional behavior the like of which I had never seen or heard of in American history, and as an historian I study the subject."

Will the same problems arise under the next Democratic administration? Kohn believes the military has learned from its experiences under Clinton, but notes that "it's much more difficult for the military as a whole to work for a

BY SOME ACCOUNTS, RUMSFELD IS THE **MOST DISLIKED DEFENSE SECRETARY** AMONG THE OFFICERS' CORPS **SINCE ROBERT MCNAMARA.**

dismissive and peremptory and sometimes abusive in person; clearly some people don't want to work for him." Kohn cites Rumsfeld's treatment of former Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki as a particular example of the secretary's worst traits. Among other things, Rumsfeld undercut Shinseki by announcing the general's retirement 14 months in advance.

But Kohn credits Rumsfeld with at least exercising civilian authority over the military in a firm, if often high-handed, fashion. Such authority had

Democrat president, and you saw the kind of anger at Al Gore and the whole argument over the Florida voting and counting." And Florida in 2000 was not the first or only time that Democrats apparently tried to compensate for the Republican advantage among military voters by challenging the legitimacy of servicemen's votes. Samuel Wright, a captain in the U.S. Naval Reserve who has made it a personal crusade to fight for military voting rights, tells of cases from Texas to Alaska of absentee ballots from soldiers, sailors, airmen and

Marines being challenged for seemingly political reasons. He also cites instances of Democrats simply neglecting military voters altogether. For example, the Department of Defense's Voter Information Center offers a service in which military personnel can call a hotline to hear pre-recorded messages from, and obtain contact information for, their senators and congressmen. Twenty-two Republican senators and 145 House Republicans use the service, compared to only two Democrats in the Senate and 16 in the House.

Such things exacerbate the political polarization of the armed forces, and the consequences of that polarization worry analysts like Peter Feaver. "[I]t leads to incoming commanders-in-chief questioning the loyalty of senior military advisors on whose advice they would depend—leads to purges of whole cadres of senior officers." It also runs the risk of turning the military into a political football, Feaver warns:

The idea that we want to treat the military as just another interest group like African-Americans or disabled Americans, or gays, or whatever—that we're going to try to peel off folks from this to have them vote for us—that leads to trouble because the military occupies a special place in American life. It's a little like carving an electoral strategy to get judges to vote for me. That's a problem. Obviously, judges should be allowed to vote, but you don't want to have a political strategy that's aimed at getting the judiciary to vote for you or at denying them the vote.

What is more, the ideological polarization of the military contributes to a larger disjunction between the armed forces and American society as a whole, what Thomas Ricks, a *Washington Post* reporter specializing in military affairs,

called in a 1997 *Atlantic* article "the growing gap between the military and society." Ricks followed the development of several young recruits to the Marines from basic training to their post-graduation leave. He found that when they returned home they felt alienated from their old lives and thought of civilian society as something both foreign and morally inferior. On that last point, the recent *Military Times* poll provides evidence that such sentiments are not limited to Marines. The survey

Something that Clinton Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has in common with Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld is that both ordered the military to mobilize in ways that senior officers objected to on prudential grounds. Something Albright once said might just as well have come from Rumsfeld: "What good is the military if you can't use it?"

The civilian-military gap began to emerge with the end of the draft. The conscript army, for obvious reasons, presented more of a cross-section of Ameri-

AT AN EXTREME, SOME HAVE SUGGESTED BRINGING BACK THE DRAFT.

reported that 66 percent of respondents felt that members of the U.S. military have "higher moral values" than civilians. A plurality, 40 percent, disagreed or strongly disagreed when asked whether the nation's civilian leadership has their best interests at heart.

The effects of these sentiments are muted somewhat while a Republican is in the White House and the political differences between civilians and the armed forces are minimized. But even with a Republican in office, the gap can have serious consequences; Rumsfeld's clashes with the Army brass are but one example. Perversely, the upshot is much the same under a Republican as under a Democrat, despite the military's own partisan preferences. In both cases, the gulf between military and civilian leadership means a civilian command less able to understand the armed forces' perspective, and less inclined to take top-ranking officers seriously when they advise against sending too few troops into combat in too many places.

Under Republicans and Democrats alike, the civilians are the ones favoring more deployments with fewer resources.

can public opinion and political beliefs. But it is not just self-selection that accounts for the partisan turn the armed forces—whose officer class carefully cultivated political neutrality from World War II to Vietnam—have taken. The loss of faith in civilian command occasioned by the Vietnam conflict played its part, as have changes in domestic political geography—the Republicanization of the South has augmented the military's Republican tendencies, since more bases are to be found there and more recruits come from that region.

Suggestions for overcoming the gap range from electing more veterans to Congress to expanding ROTC programs in order to introduce more liberal-minded college students into the ranks of officers. At an extreme, some have suggested bringing back the draft. For the foreseeable future, though, the political and cultural distinctness of the military will persist, and is something that both major parties should give careful thought to, with an eye toward ameliorating the fact rather than exploiting it. The odds of that happening, however, must be considered depressingly small. ■

The Sphinx in Winter

America's burgeoning trade deficits threaten Greenspan's legacy.

By Eamonn Fingleton

FOR THOSE WHO WATCH the American economy, the Internet boasts few more useful resources than the Web site of the Federal Reserve. In a few clicks you can mine data on everything from the level of interest rates on Black Monday to the growth of steel production under Eisenhower. Whether the topic is the trend in semiconductor prices, the impact of weather on retailing, or the most efficacious way for corporations to break bad financial news, someone at the Fed has studied it and has posted his findings.

Strangely, though, one crucial economic concern gets short shrift: international trade. Not only are there no trade statistics, but America's perennially rising trade deficits have received virtually no attention from the Fed's monograph writers in recent years.

This blindspot faithfully reflects the mindset at the top. Fed chairman Alan Greenspan consistently tiptoes around the subject of trade. Indeed, the worse America's trade figures have become, the less willing he has been to look the trade trend in the eye.

Yet when future historians look back on America's economic performance in recent decades, no problem will loom larger in retrospect than that of the deteriorating trade position—and, as a result, no reputation is destined to come in for more extensive revision than that of the Sphinx of Constitution Avenue.

Although the Fed chairman has no direct control over trade policy, he is in a uniquely powerful position to moderate

the climate of opinion in which that policy is set. It is fair to say that where economic matters are concerned, he enjoys far greater trust than any president. In any case, he has been in office far longer than any president: already he has served under no less than four. Whereas each succeeding president could plausibly spin the trade trend as a temporary aberration and bequeath the painful task of rethinking trade policy to his successor, Greenspan can offer no such alibi. One of his most important responsibilities is to safeguard the value of the dollar. Trade ranks with inflation as one of the two key determinants of the dollar's long-run external purchasing power. Trade, moreover, is of pivotal importance for America's continued leadership of the world community.

Although the press airbrushed the problem out of the picture during the economic euphoria of the late 1990s, the trade deficits never went away. In fact, as the American public is belatedly beginning to discover, they got far worse—so much so that the monthly deficits under George W. Bush are sometimes higher than the total *annual* deficit in his father's last year in office.

In the past year we have seen a dramatic rise in the number of talking heads who openly question American trade policy. In the academic world, MIT economist Lester Thurow has suggested that America's trade deficits could trigger a 50 percent-plus collapse in the dollar's external value, and this in turn would lead to a global depression. Meanwhile

on CNN, Lou Dobbs fulminates nightly about the impact of imports on American manufacturing jobs. In the world of business, critics of U.S. trade policy include that ultimate financial heavyweight, Warren Buffett. Even investment banker Robert Rubin, who as Clinton's treasury secretary did much to create the trade problem, has now added his voice to the hue and cry. Then there is Henry Kissinger. Obliquely criticizing American trade policy at a conference last summer, he suggested that a nation that had lost its manufacturing base could not long remain a world power.

Figures to be published in March will show that expressed as a percentage of GDP the current-account trade gap has now topped the psychologically important 5 percent level. This is the worst performance since American economic records were first published in the 19th century. By comparison, the notorious U.S. trade crisis of 1971-72 was a mere blip. The trade deficit in 1972, at 0.5 percent of GDP, was less than one-tenth the current level. Yet the 1972 trade deficit seemed so troubling in prospect that President Nixon was forced to devalue the dollar and cut its erstwhile "sacred" link with gold.

The recent trade performance stands in particularly stark contrast to America's days of greatest relative economic strength in the first seven decades of the 20th century. This was a period when, thanks mainly to the extraordinary exporting prowess of America's huge

manufacturing industries, the U.S. showed a trade surplus in all but 11 years—and did so despite wages that were then five to ten times higher than in Japan and Germany.

Not only is a 5 percent current account deficit unprecedented in American economic history, but it is shocking by all previous world standards. Other major nations have incurred percentage deficits approaching this scale only at times of extreme economic distress, most notably during the two World Wars and in their immediate aftermath. The only time any of the six most economically important nations ever ran a trade deficit of more than 5 percent of GDP was Italy in 1924—hardly an auspicious precedent given that economic problems helped pave the way for Mussolini's seizure of dictatorial powers.

To the extent that the trade trend has penetrated Greenspan's consciousness, he has stubbornly insisted on viewing it through rose-tinted spectacles. Greenspan's message on trade is the simplistic one of a thousand undergraduate economics textbooks: trade benefits the consumer. And of course this is true—to a point. For a small closed economy such as that of, say, 1950s-era Ireland (with a population of three million and a per capita income about one-tenth of America's), the benefits of a more open trade policy are undisputable. What the textbooks rarely mention is that the larger an economy is, the less it stands to gain from international trade. The fundamental benefit of trade is to enable producers to achieve greater scale economies. But in most industries, scale economies are subject to diminishing returns. Certainly for an economy the size of America's, it is not at all obvious that, even were all its trade partners to play by the rules of perfect free trade, American producers in most industries would gain much on balance from competing on a global rather than merely a national scale. And in reality,

many nations are far from perfect in their observance of the rules.

This has greatly exacerbated the negative impact of foreign trade on American joblessness and industrial decline. Over the years, American industries most exposed to international trade have generally turned in a far poorer performance than more sheltered ones. Consider some facts:

- America's share of world manufacturing has fallen from 60 percent in 1950 to less than 25 percent today.
- Corporate America's share of the world's total foreign direct investment fell recently to just 21 percent—down from 47 percent in 1960.
- According to economist Richard Du Boff, non-U.S. companies account for nine of the ten largest electronics and electrical equipment manufacturers, eight of the ten largest auto makers, seven of the ten largest oil refiners, five of ten pharmaceutical firms, and four of six chemical producers.
- Even in aerospace, one of the last remaining areas of American industrial strength, the writing is on the wall. Last year, Europe's Airbus for the first time bested Boeing in deliveries of completed planes. And the new Boeing 7E7, which is expected to be launched in 2016, will be largely a foreign plane in terms of its manufactured inputs and, by Boeing's own admission, Japanese partners will account for much of the most advanced work.
- In supercomputers—so vital for U.S. national security and once one of America's most avidly defended industrial strongholds—American leadership is a thing of the past. Although it was widely reported in the early 1990s that American supercomputer makers had staged a come

back after losing the lead in the late 1980s, this has proved to have been a mirage. As of 2002, a Japanese laboratory had built a supercomputer whose processing power matched that of the 20 fastest American supercomputers combined.

At the level of ordinary Americans, the pattern of worsening U.S. trade balances correlates closely with declining manufacturing employment. As economist Pat Choate has pointed out, the United States has lost more than four million labor-intensive manufacturing jobs in the last decade. Of these, more than half disappeared in just the last three years. The result is that manufacturing's share of total employment had fallen to 10.7 percent by last year—versus 18.2 percent in 1989 and 33.1 percent in 1950.

Manufacturing's falling share in total employment correlates closely with a pattern of stagnant middle-class income growth. These days most families need two incomes to maintain the sort of lifestyle that fathers alone could deliver a generation ago. In 1960, fewer than 27 percent of all married women living with their husbands worked. By 2000, the figure had risen to 62 percent. Forty years ago, moreover, only 19 percent of such women with children under six worked. By 2000, this share was 63 percent.

If the immediate problems associated with the rising trade deficits are troubling, the consequences for America's future are positively frightening. Because its manufacturing base has shrunk so drastically, the American nation is like a household whose income lags behind its soaring spending. To pay the bills, a profligate household must either run up credit or sell the family silver. Neither option is attractive. In the long run, loans must be repaid, and in the meantime interest mounts up. As for selling the family silver, one can do that only

once. Either way there will be a reckoning. And the longer it is postponed, the more painful it will be.

The same logic applies to nations. As the Federal Reserve should be acutely aware, it is a fundamental fact of economic life that every dollar a nation incurs in current account deficits must be funded by a dollar of foreign finance. In the case of the U.S. trade deficits, much of the foreign funding comes from foreigners buying U.S. Treasury bonds. Some comes from foreign banks lending to American counterparts. Much of the rest comes from foreigners buying American real estate and equities.

In an increasingly troubling trend that has its roots in the trade imbalances, foreigners are even buying some of America's largest corporations outright. The United States is selling the family silver.

Such pillars of American industry as Amoco and Chrysler have been bought by foreigners. In 2002, Lucent, heir to the fabled technological riches of Bell Labs, sold its optical fiber business to Furukawa of Japan. Meanwhile IBM announced the sale of its disk drive business, a crucial high-tech operation that has played a historic role in the development of the global computer industry. Again the buyer was Japanese, in this case Hitachi.

Large parts of Wall Street have also come under foreign control. Names like Scudder Investments, Bankers Trust, First Boston, Alliance Capital, Republic Bank, Kemper Corporation, Alex Brown, and Dillon Read may still sound American, but these former pillars of the American financial establishment are now controlled from places like Zurich, Frankfurt, Paris, and London.

Even the American book-publishing industry is now largely foreign owned. On one estimate, German companies alone now account for more than half the industry. American publishers that are now German-owned include Random



House, St. Martin's Press, and Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Even President Clinton's memoirs are to be published by a foreign-owned publisher, the Knopf imprint of Random House. (Random House was taken over by the German Bertelsmann group in 1998.)

The U.S. has already sold so much of its asset base that its economic standing on the world stage has been significantly undermined. While this may not be obvious to the American public, it is shockingly clear in figures compiled by the International Monetary Fund. These show that between 1989 and 2000, America's net foreign liabilities ballooned from \$47 billion to \$2,187 billion.

Moreover in a highly alarming development, America's problem of foreign indebtedness is now feeding on itself. In the words of the British fund manager Marshall Auerback, America has

entered a banana-republic-style "debt trap." The nub of the problem is in the vast and ever rising flow of dividends and interest payments that the United States must now remit abroad to foreign owners of American assets.

The picture looks even bleaker in light of the likely denouement: devaluation of the dollar. Already in the last year we have seen a significant fall in the dollar, particularly against the euro. But the message of the continuing monthly trade deficits is that even at today's exchange rates, most American manufacturers are still seriously uncompetitive. Thus it is tempting to suggest that a much more drastic devaluation is needed to bring U.S. trade into balance. Unfortunately all the evidence is that in the conditions of contemporary America, devaluation simply won't work—or at least will not work in any reasonable period.

On paper, devaluation seems the right solution. After all, it immediately makes American goods cheaper to foreign consumers and should thus powerfully stimulate exports. Similarly, at home devaluation should enable American producers to win back domestic market share previously lost to imports.

All this, however, is dependent on the assumption that a nation's manufacturing industries have plenty of unused capacity available to take advantage of post-devaluation opportunities. In America's case, this assumption has long since ceased to be valid. After 30 years of merchandise trade deficits, once formidable manufacturing capacity has been wiped out. Thus in the short- to medium-term, devaluation will actually prove counterproductive. This is because import volumes will hardly decrease while import costs, as expressed in dollars, will rise considerably. The backfire will be particularly marked in the case of imports from advanced manufacturing nations like Japan and Germany. These nations now increasingly specialize in making goods that America no longer knows how to

unnoticed at the time, strongly hinted that America's current account imbalances were spiraling out of control. In an unusually outspoken report, it suggested that, even assuming the deficit in visible trade did not deteriorate further, mounting debt service costs would push the current account deficit to 7.5 percent of GDP by 2010.

By all accounts, the outlook has worsened since 2000. Choate predicts that, absent drastic policy changes, America's current account deficit could reach 10 percent of GDP within a decade.

Only one man has the capacity to provide effective leadership on this: the Federal Reserve chairman. But Greenspan has long since proved himself incompetent to the task. The key charge against him is a startling one: a signal lack of intellectual curiosity. Faced with a trade trend that has defied all textbook theory, he has monumentally failed to ask intelligent questions.

When U.S. trade deficits first emerged in the 1970s, the universal assumption was that, rather like a self-righting lifeboat, the American economy was

The dollar was supposed to be the canary in the mine. This expectation was fostered by extensive practical experience elsewhere, most notably in the United Kingdom, whose economic history in the 1960s and 1970s was punctuated by repeated trade-driven runs on sterling.

The puzzling thing is that though many foreign investors have sold the dollar over the years, they have never dumped it on a sufficiently large scale to jolt Washington into appropriately robust policy changes. Still less has the dollar's declining trend served to bring imports and exports into balance. Contrary to all textbook theory, certain players in the world's financial markets have assiduously bought enough Treasury bonds and other American assets to make sure the dollar's landings have been soft. In particular, the government of Japan systematically bought U.S. Treasury bonds for decades. More importantly, by dint of its regulatory powers over Japanese life-insurance companies and other institutional investors, it has funneled a huge share of Japanese private savings into American assets. Similar policies have long been pursued in Taiwan and South Korea. Recently China has followed suit—on a scale that is now second only to Japan's.

Why have these nations appeared so happy to eat dollars? In the case of Japan, the U.S. media has suggested the motive is to prop up weak Japanese manufacturing industries. In reality, the competitiveness of Japan's industries is hardly in doubt. Japan's current account surpluses, at about four times China's, are by far the world's largest.

Another explanation is that the East Asians are so enchanted with America's economic prospects that they see U.S. Treasury bonds as a sure thing. Not only has Greenspan not questioned this media-fostered canard, but he seems delighted to embrace it. Yet it does not stand up to even cursory scrutiny. In the

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make—items like advanced materials (such as the super-strong composites used in planes), key components (such as the more complex parts in cell phones), and sophisticated capital goods (everything from the semiconductor industry's "steppers" to television broadcasting equipment).

This helps explain why three years ago the U.S. government's own Trade Deficit Review Commission, in an extraordinary move that went largely

subject to semi-automatic influences that would eventually bring imports and exports back into balance. In particular, it was believed that, as foreign investors sold the dollar in response to rises in the trade deficits, American policymakers would be forced to make timely adjustments. In any case, to the extent that foreign selling reduced the dollar's exchange rate, this would automatically promote American exports while discouraging imports.

higher reaches of East Asian society, it is universally understood that the United States is in steep decline. Thus the East Asian financial authorities are fully aware that in the future, as in the past, their nations' dollar investments are likely to prove duds.

Their buy-the-dollar policy makes no sense on a stand-alone basis. It makes eminent sense, however, as part of a larger strategy. That strategy is to facilitate a historic shift in the world's manufacturing center-of-gravity. The Japanese have an adage that explains it all: "Ebi de tai o tsuru"—"Use a shrimp to catch a sea bream."

Though Greenspan has a record of perfect probity as a public official, he risks his entire legacy over his incompetent handling of trade. The graceful thing for him to do would be to admit what is now becoming obvious: that he has underestimated the seriousness of the trade trend. Following that, he should resign to make way for a younger, more energetic person to tackle the nearly intractable crisis. By the very act of nobly falling on his sword, Greenspan would powerfully dramatize the nature of the crisis and thus help galvanize the nation for inescapably tough measures.

If, by contrast, he hangs on, he may succeed for a few more years in sweeping the crisis under the carpet. But in the absence of drastic policy changes, the truth will come out, probably in the form of a devastating dollar crash.

By making a graceful exit now, Greenspan can hope to be remembered for his intellectual courage in admitting his mistakes. On the other hand, if he hangs on, the result will be certain obloquy: he will be fated to be remembered as the man who lost America. ■

Eamonn Fingleton is the author of Unsustainable: How Economic Dogma is Destroying American Prosperity.

Telling Them What They Want to Hear

Iraq Survey Group's David Kay's wide-eyed revelation that there must be something wrong with America's intelligence collection efforts because he could not find any WMD is either hopelessly naïve or wickedly clever. The principal beneficiary of Kay's message is the White House, now victimized and "misled" on Iraqi weapons because the intelligence was so bad. Kay, who like George W. Bush is unable to pronounce the word "nuclear," accomplishes two other things, intentionally or otherwise. One will please the president, and the other will not. He generously grants the intelligence community's senior management a free pass because he opines that the long established analytical process does not work—not necessarily the fault of the current leadership. But his critique also implies that preemptive war can hardly be a credible or acceptable government policy if accurate intelligence cannot be relied upon to support it, a judgment that the White House cannot welcome.

Why was the intelligence estimate so bad?

First, the system was flooded by a stream of neocon-generated false information that circumvented the normal procedures and went straight to the president through the good offices of Dick Cheney. The intelligence process is simple—information is collected, compiled, analyzed, and then disseminated to consumers. If information is ambiguous or inconclusive, it can still be presented but carefully caveated. But if it is false and is allowed to evade the safeguards built into the system, it can do real damage.

The second Iraq intelligence failure was leadership, not process. The CIA Director sets intelligence objectives and determines how best to collect the needed information. George Tenet may be a great guy to talk earned run averages with, but he is a sycophantic bureaucrat at heart, not a trained intelligence officer. Under Tenet, the Agency's operational directorate has produced more lawyers than spies. Tenet allowed himself to become too close to the consumers of his intelligence and does not have the gravitas to tell the White House "no" backed up by a threat to resign, which is precisely what he should have done as the rush to war gained momentum. Instead, he remained the loyal team player, a latter-day bat boy on the Texas Rangers. CIA analysts are honorable and professional, but the heavy-handed intrusion of Dick Cheney into the generation of an Iraq dossier was both unprecedented and irresistible, drowning out dissent. It broke down the essential firewall between intelligence and consumers and placed analysts in an intolerable position, which Tenet should never have permitted.

That the CIA was institutionally culpable for failing in its own efforts to collect answers to key questions is also undeniable, but the failure is again one of leadership. The Agency's spies, headed by Tenet protégé James Pavitt, have become so risk averse that they cannot run an operation against any target or country where English is not spoken and the comforting warmth of a U.S. government facility is lacking. The intelligence community leadership problem means that poor information on Iraq due to the lack of reliable human source reporting might, unfortunately, be repeated against al-Qaeda, Iran, and North Korea. ■

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA Officer, is a partner in Cannistraro Associates, an international security consultancy.

[spotted owls but not sprawl]

Environmentalist Catastrophe

Immigration reduction is an ecologically sensible policy—but try telling that to the Sierra Club establishment.

By Brenda Walker

“THE SIERRA CLUB is facing the toughest challenge in our 112-year history!” shrieked previous president Lawrence Downing in a January e-mail.

What was this unprecedented threat faced by the nation’s most influential environmental organization? An increased danger of global warming? Some impending great extinction? Overfishing’s depletion of the ocean’s fish stocks? Shrinking ozone layer? Pollution?

No, none of these. The corporate Sierra Club fears that its own democratic process will allow a “hostile takeover” of the governing Board of Directors by candidates who support immigration restriction. The contamination from these takeover artists will surely be “fatal” to the Club, according to Downing. “It would be the end of John Muir’s vision as we know it.”

Who are these dangerous individuals who purportedly wish to hijack the august Sierra Club and abuse it for their nefarious ends? The candidates so thoroughly condemned in such overwrought tones are former Colorado Governor Richard Lamm, one-time Executive Director of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Frank Morris, and Cornell Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology David Pimentel. These are reputable men of high achievement,

yet they are portrayed as scurrilous players in a right-wing power grab. What is going on?

There is serious character assassination afoot when a black man who has received awards from the NAACP is accused of “keeping this country white,” and a former state governor known for his environmental record is smeared as a “radical anti-immigrant activist.” But these smear tactics should come as no surprise since the old-guard Sierra Club has allied itself with the current masters of the genre, Morris Dees and his Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC).

The new “grassroots” Web site GroundSwellSierra.org, which contains many of the most inflammatory charges, has SPLC fingerprints all over it. Prominent is a 3,100-word letter from SPLC’s Mark Potok to Sierra Club President Larry Fahn. It’s dated Oct. 21, 2003, so clearly the SPLC has been planning its attacks for some time prior to the mid-January Web launch. And Morris Dees has inserted himself into the Sierra Club elections not only by making baseless accusations, but also by running as a candidate. If elected, he will not serve: he says he is running only to draw attention to the “hostile takeover.” And Dees has expertise at drawing attention—to his own advantage.

In November 2000, *Harper’s* ran an exposé on Dees’s use of the civil-rights issue to amass a huge fortune for the SPLC, more than \$100 million. According to author Ken Silverstein, Dees cares more about “a relentless fund-raising campaign” than championing racial equality. Silverstein also noted that the “American Institute of Philanthropy gives the center one of the worst ratings of any group it monitors,” and that a former SPLC director called Dees “a fraud and a conman.”

More recently, the *Northern Virginia Journal* wrote of the SPLC, “If you don’t particularly want your charitable donations to go towards somebody’s mortgage or country club dues, give your hard-earned dollars to a real charity, not a bunch of slick, parasitic hucksters who live high on the hog by raising money on behalf of needy people who never see a dime of it.” Now Dees has turned his tactics on the Sierra Club—and the venerable organization is vulnerable.

In the opinion of many thoughtful environmentalists, the Sierra Club has lost touch with its roots. This side trip into shrieking accusations against decent people comes as a particular shock. Instead of focusing on protecting the environment, the Club has sought to

expand its mission into areas that are peripheral at best, such as campaign finance reform, women's empowerment, and vaguely defined social justice. Others believe the Sierra Club has become an operating arm of the Democratic Party rather than representing conservationists of both parties.

The move away from membership roots has not gone unnoticed. One of the nicer aspects of the organization has always been how the grassroots emphasis created different ways for local people to take part—from participating in habitat restoration to working on regional policy issues. But the elitist cadre at the top has little interest in local concerns. These days when grassroots Sierra members turn to headquarters for support, directors connected with the establishment—those nominated for their positions by the board rather than through member petitions—often vote against grassroots interests, according to a recent analysis from director Ben Zuckerman, who has worked hard to support democracy in the Club.

One curiosity in the current controversy is that the cause the SPLC finds so hateful—that immigration should be legal, controlled, and reduced—is supported by the majority of American people across the political spectrum. Even Democrats want border enforcement, and in only slightly lower percentages than do Republicans.

Apparently Dees and company believe they can portray themselves as saving the Sierra Club with no one noticing the truth, namely that the SPLC is maligning people who support what most Americans want and that limiting immigration is a logical element of conservation. Or perhaps Dees figures that he can market his agenda without worrying about public opinion or the Club's historic mission.

Exploding American population numbers—growth that comes almost entirely

from immigrants and their offspring—mean that this country will have over half a billion people by 2050 if trends continue at the rate of the last decade. Americans would need to halve current individual consumption to stay even with today's pollution output—a highly unlikely prospect. But most environmentalists are too politically correct to speak of immigration so instead advocate reducing consumption without addressing logical reductions in imported population growth.

Unless our open-border policies are remedied, today's children will grow up in an unrecognizable country, one without the stirring vistas that have traditionally inspired Americans to believe in greater possibilities. In addition, an extraordinary degree of regimentation will be required to prevent social chaos among the millions competing for shrinking resources of all sorts—from water to college slots.

Dr. David Pimentel, one of the candidates for Sierra Club Board, has predicted that population growth and the

born children. *Sacramento Bee* columnist Dan Walters has observed, "Without immigration ... California population growth would be zero."

Water supply and quality are serious concerns in California, where much of the land is arid. Los Angeles is already planning to recycle toilet water for drinking purposes because of increasing demand. In 2001, Maurice Roos, chief hydrologist for the California Department of Water Resources, remarked, "We simply don't have the storage capacity to carry us through two dry years any more." The rationing and conservation practices of the 1970s drought—grey-water gardening, short showers, and generally reduced usage—will become the way of life as California hits 40 to 50 million residents.

And despite overall growth of 600,000 yearly, California's U.S.-born population actually declined by 1.5 million people over the last decade, as citizens left the overcrowding, high taxes, and gridlocked roads to find a place where America still exists. Californians have

CALIFORNIANS HAVE SHOWN NO DESIRE FOR THE **DECREASED QUALITY OF LIFE** INHERENT IN THE GOVERNMENT'S **MANDATED OVERPOPULATION** PROGRAM AND ARE **VOTING WITH MOVING VANS.**

resulting loss of farmland to housing along with soil degradation will damage America's capacity to produce food. In fact, he expects the nation will no longer be a food exporter within two decades.

Any who think immigration is not culpable need look no further than California, where an environmental Eden now suffers Third World overcrowding. The 2000 census revealed that 25.9 percent of California residents are foreign born, and that does not count their American-

shown no desire for the decreased quality of life inherent in the government's mandated overpopulation program and are voting with moving vans.

This crisis seems a logical province for the nation's premier conservation organization, but thus far the Sierra Club has chosen to opt out. Until about a decade ago, it had a declared policy about the limits to growth, stating in 1970 that the organization should support policies that "bring about the stabi-

lization of the population first of the United States and then of the world.” But in 1996, the Club reversed its position by stating it “will take no position on immigration levels or on policies governing immigration into the United States. The Club remains committed to environmental rights and protections for all within our borders, without discrimination based on immigration status.”

The policy change prompted several long-time members to form an ad hoc group called “Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization” (SUSPS). The Club responded by threatening SUSPS over the trademarked name “Sierran,” despite the fact that sub-groups like Gay Sierrans and Senior Sierrans have never been bothered.

In 1998, SUSPS presented the Club membership with an opportunity to return to the original 1970 policy through a ballot initiative that was part of the annual election. The measure lost 60-40 after a campaign that included

shenanigans such as the creation of a confusing second ballot statement.

In 2002, UCLA astronomy professor and SUSPS founder Ben Zuckerman won a seat on the Board with the highest number of votes of any candidate. In 2003, two SUSPS-recommended candidates—

as a foil as part of a nationalist campaign to close borders.” He held a scruffy little sign reading “Control Immigration” as a visual aid and warned that the Sierra Club was facing the presence of directors who want the nation’s immigration laws enforced.

SKYROCKETING POPULATION GROWTH IN AMERICA, FUELED ALMOST ENTIRELY BY MASS IMMIGRATION, ENDANGERS NEARLY EVERY HARD-WON ENVIRONMENTAL GAIN.

Paul Watson, founder of the ocean-mammal-protection group Sea Shepherd, and Doug LaFollette, long-time environmentalist and now Wisconsin Secretary of State—won places on the Board.

When these two new members took their seats, one of the outgoing directors, Michael Dorsey, a long-time exponent of the leftist social justice faction, used his last moments to excoriate the incoming directors for “using this club

By the end of the day, Paul Watson could no longer restrain his anger at the gratuitous insults of earlier from Michael Dorsey. “I am an immigrant who is a supporter of sustainable population,” Watson said as he objected to the personal attacks. “We don’t choose issues; they choose us.”

At this writing, the grassroots volunteers of SUSPS are fighting back on their usual shoestring against the enormous power and resources of the Sierra Club and Morris Dees’s SPLC to affect public opinion and the election. A Web site is planned, www.SierraDemocracy.org, to explain the issues and remind members what all the obfuscation is about: skyrocketing population growth in America, fueled almost entirely by mass immigration, endangers nearly every hard-won environmental gain. Without reform, the future will be an asphalt America—endless gridlock from sea to shining sea with a bird’s song or the beauty of a sweetly flowing stream available only in digital form. The old Sierra Club would never have stood for that. ■

Brenda Walker has been a member of the Sierra Club since 1984. She publishes two websites, www.LimitsToGrowth.org and www.Immigrations-HumanCost.org, and is a member of the VDARE.com editorial collective.

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Arts & Letters

FILM

[*Monster*]

Pretty Ugly

By Steve Sailer

THE SORRY LIFE STORY of the Jacqueline-the-Ripper serial killer Aileen Wuornos, a Florida roadside prostitute who robbed and murdered seven men she had flagged down, has already been beaten to death in tabloid television shows, documentaries, books, a TV movie-of-the-week, and even an opera. Therefore, "Monster" has only one justification for its existence, but it's a doozy: the instantly famous performance by the lovely Afrikaner starlet Charlize Theron.

Since 1997, Hollywood has been promoting the former model as the next big thing, but the public has barely noticed her. So the 5'-10" Theron put on 25 husky pounds, jutting false teeth, and blotchy makeup over her Marilyn Monroe-like complexion. It's a remarkable transformation, but it raises the question of why the filmmakers didn't just hire a homely actress in the first place and save everyone a lot of trouble.

Theron, though, perfected a host of low-brow masculine mannerisms reminiscent of blond '80s doofuses like Alex Winter's Ted in "Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure" and Tim Robbins's Nuke LaLoosh in "Bull Durham."

She portrays Wuornos as a volatile mixture of too much testosterone and too much estrogen, possessing both an unwarranted confidence in her looks and an inordinate need to be adored for them.

At age 13, according to "Monster," Wuornos was obsessed by how Marilyn

Monroe was discovered at a drug store counter. (Actually, it was Lana Turner, but scholarship was not her strong suit.) Unfortunately, her strategy for getting herself discovered never progresses much past hitchhiking on rural highways and hoping that one of her truck driving johns will be a movie mogul.

In her early thirties, Wuornos calls herself a hooker, but that represents less confession than career nostalgia, for she is now a homeless person who intermittently turns \$20 tricks for beer money.

One day in 1989, a rain-soaked Wuornos wanders into a Florida tavern that turns out to be one of those dual-purpose small-town gay bars where the men dance to disco in one corner while the women shoot pool to a jukebox full of Joan Jett in the other. A conservatively dressed young lesbian named Selby (played by former child star Christina Ricci) plies her with beer and soon has Wuornos thinking that since the male sex has yet to succumb to her charms, maybe she should retire from whoring

for herself she's singularly unsuited to bring home the bacon for two. Unhappily, a résumé with nothing on it other than an armed robbery conviction has her shouting obscenities at unimpressed job interviewers.

With Selby's pimpish encouragement, Wuornos is soon back thumbing rides. A sadist tries to thrill-kill her, but Wuornos shoots him first. It's a horrible experience, but, hey, she gets a free car out of it, which pleases Selby.

So Wuornos starts robbing men and shooting them to cover up. When Wuornos discovers she just killed a cop, Selby flatly refuses to flee town in anything as inconvenient as a bus, and knowingly sends Wuornos out to slaughter another human being for his wheels.

As impressive as Theron is, she's on-screen so much that her tricks and tics start to take on a life of their own. "Monster" could have been a better movie with Theron in a supporting role and Ricci's more subtly malign Selby as the focus.

Feminism, however, has made femme

FEMINISM HAS MADE FEMME FATALES VERBOTEN. TODAY WOMEN ARE SUPPOSED TO BE VICTIMS, NOT MANIPULATORS.

and settle down to playing femme with this ardent little butch.

But with Theron towering nine inches over Ricci, it looks unlikely that Wuornos's plan will work out better than any of her other sexual ambitions. Selby proves to be a teenager with no money and little interest in working for it. Worse, she's excited by Wuornos prostituting herself and wants to live off her earnings.

But love has made Wuornos sick of hooking. Switching from femme to butch, Wuornos sallies forth with her usual self-esteem to find honest work, but having failed for years at providing

fatales *verboten*. Today women are supposed to be victims, not manipulators. "Monster" thus emphasizes how Wuornos was really a casualty of her horrible upbringing. Of course, lots of people somehow survive childhood traumas. When Theron was 14, for example, her mother killed her drunken father in self-defense—but somehow Charlize hasn't murdered anybody yet.

Eventually, Wuornos confessed to six premeditated robbery-murders, but it still took over a decade before her execution in 2002. ■

Rated R for strong violence and sexual content, and for pervasive language.

BOOKS

[*Galileo in Rome: The Rise and Fall of a Troublesome Genius*, William R. Shea and Mariano Artigas, Oxford University Press, 226 pages.]

[*Galileo's Mistake: A New Look at the Epic Confrontation Between Galileo and the Church*, Wade Rowland, Arcade Publishing, 298 pages.]

The Near Side of the Telescope

By Gene Callahan

THE STORY OF GALILEO is one of the foundational myths of the modern, scientific age. As schoolchildren, we learn that he discovered the true nature of the solar system by heeding the plain evidence of the senses, eschewing dogma and metaphysical speculation. But when Galileo published his findings, the Catholic Church, in the guise of the Inquisition, demanded he recant his heretical notions. The Inquisition imprisoned and tortured him. To save his life, Galileo recanted. As he did so, however, he heroically muttered "And yet it [the earth] moves."

Recent scholarship on Galileo has revealed that almost every element of the myth is either entirely fictitious or is a distorted view of what really happened. Two recently published books, *Galileo in Rome* and *Galileo's Mistake*, each draw attention to the many ways the myth varies from the historical facts.

For example, the evidence available to astronomers in the early 17th century did not support Galileo's model of the solar system. Some of Galileo's key arguments for a heliocentric solar system today are regarded as wildly erroneous. A colleague of Galileo's, Johannes Kepler, had developed a helio-

centric model of planetary motion that fit the facts far better than Galileo's theory did, as did Tycho Brahe's geocentric model.

The Catholic Church was not committed to a literal interpretation of the Bible and had not been since at least the time of Augustine, over a thousand years before Galileo. Church scholars eagerly employed telescopes to observe the heavens. They carefully examined the evidence Galileo presented for his model but found it unconvincing. The prejudice in favor of a geocentric solar system, while supported by certain Biblical passages, was based mainly on Aristotelian physics. Galileo was never tortured, and almost certainly never uttered those famous words before the Inquisition.

The Galileo myth has been constructed in order to portray science as the champion of reason and common-sense attention to "the plain facts," doing battle with the dark forces of dogmatism, represented by religion. However, as these two books demonstrate, the purveyors of this myth themselves have ignored the plain facts of history in creating it.

Far from relying on the direct evidence of the senses to make his case, Galileo had to contend that our senses frequently deceive us. Aristotelian physics, after all, was very much a science of direct observation. Our senses plainly tell us that the earth stands still and the sun moves. As philosopher Paul Feyerabend notes in *Against Method*, "seen from the point of view of these 'facts,' the idea of the motion of the earth is outlandish, absurd, and obviously false..." He quotes Galileo himself as asserting: "[Copernicus] resolutely continued to affirm what sensible experience seemed to contradict."

Proponents of the Galileo myth frequently mock his critics for questioning the veracity of the celestial images presented by the telescope, but this is unjustified. For one thing, the primary evidence we have for the existence of skeptics who simply refused to look through a telescope comes from Galileo himself. But, as *Galileo's Mistake* notes, "recent scholar-

ship suggests that his 'opponents' were frequently straw men concocted as part of Galileo's polemical style."

Furthermore, in the early 17th century, telescopes were both quite new and quite primitive. Given the lack of experience looking through telescopes, coupled with their poor quality, it was often quite difficult, even for those sincerely open-minded, to make out just what they were seeing. And the telescope sometimes produced what were clearly optical illusions: how could one say with certainty that the moons of Jupiter or sunspots were not also illusions?

But, supporters of the Galileo myth might contend, given that the telescope had yielded a startling extension of vision for well-known objects on the earth, wasn't it obvious that it worked similarly for celestial objects? Such an argument ignores the essence of the debate in which Galileo was engaged. Aristotelian physics held that celestial entities were of an entirely different nature from terrestrial ones: simple observation seemed to affirm this, since terrestrial objects fall to the earth while celestial ones remain in the heavens.

Galileo, however, affirmed that the physics of the earth applied equally to the heavens. To argue that the success of telescopes with terrestrial objects proved that it worked well for extraterrestrial ones is to beg the primary question under debate. One would have had already to conclude that the physics of the heavens were identical to the physics of the earth before one could use the telescope's earthly success to demonstrate its celestial efficacy.

The idea of Galileo as a pure empiricist is also contradicted by other facts. *Galileo in Rome* notes that one of the major pieces of evidence Galileo advanced for the Copernican system was the existence of tides, contending that they were caused by the motion of the earth.

That is quite different from our current understanding, which is that tides arise from the gravitational influence of the moon. But what is really surprising about Galileo's hypothesis is that he had not

determined the period of the tides before advancing his theory! His hypothesis depended on a 24-hour tidal cycle, while in fact their cycle is 12 hours. When he learned that sailors in the Mediterranean reported that both high and low tides occurred twice a day, he dismissed the discrepancy as resulting from local variations in the ocean bottom.

Galileo also ignored Kepler's suggestion that the planets orbit the sun in elliptical paths, rather than the circular ones Galileo proposed. Kepler's model fit the data better than Galileo's, yet Kepler's letters to Galileo suggesting elliptical orbits never elicited a response.

Perhaps the primary conflict between Galileo and his early supporter Pope Urban VIII was whether astronomical theories were merely models or were, in some sense, the truth about the world. Urban had little problem with Copernicanism being presented as a model that enabled better predictions about planetary motion. But to contend that a model was "the truth," in Urban's view, was to "constrain God with necessity," falsifying the true nature of His creation, which surpassed any schemes devised by mortals.

Galileo paid lip service to Urban's view, hoping to stave off prosecution. But it was obvious that he thought Copernicanism was the real truth about the solar system. Today, as pointed out by Alfred North Whitehead in *Science and the Modern World*, science has come down on the side of Urban: "Galileo said that the earth moves and that the sun is fixed; the Inquisition said that the earth is fixed and the sun moves; and Newtonian astronomers... said that both the sun and the earth move. But now we say that any one of these three statements is equally true, provided that you have fixed your sense of 'rest' and 'motion' in the way required ..."

Although the two books reviewed here express broadly similar views about Galileo's relationship with the Church, *Galileo in Rome* is by far the more successful effort. It does not attempt to be more than a straightforward history of the events in question, but it does that job most ably, deftly

employing the unifying device of Galileo's six trips to Rome. The authors examine the changing context of each trip, thereby portraying the transformation of the relationship between Galileo and the Church. Shea, a professor of the history of science, and Artigas, who holds doctorates in both philosophy and physics, are content to let the reader reach his own conclusions.

On the other hand, *Galileo's Mistake* strives to be much more than just history, but it overreaches. Rowland combines history, travelogue, Socratic dialogue, philosophy of science, and contemporary social commentary. As a result, the book lacks focus, and contains many questionable extrapolations as well as outright mistakes.

For example, Rowland says that the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics holds that consciousness is necessary for a subatomic particle to move from potential to actual existence. On the contrary, it is agnostic on this point, essentially advising physicists to ignore the philosophical overtones of their work. Rowland also describes "equants," an essential term in Kepler's model of the solar system, incorrectly.

The dialogues he intersperses throughout the book, purportedly

The title of Rowland's book comes from his contention that Galileo made a crucial error in believing that "nature is its own interpreter." It is a promising notion, but Rowland lacks the philosophical ammunition to make a convincing case for it. Nevertheless, *Galileo's Mistake* is still worth reading, with its broader, albeit flawed, reach complementing the approach of *Galileo in Rome*.

Neither book suggests that its revisions of the Galileo myth should change the reader's opinion of the behavior of the Catholic Church toward Galileo. The Church would have been within its rights to expel him if he had not recanted, but it wronged him by imprisoning him. Quite aside from this moral lapse, as a strategic move the prosecution was flawed. The Church turned Galileo into a hero, giving its enemies a tale they could retell for centuries in their war against religion.

Nor does the more accurate history remove Galileo from the ranks of great scientists. With Galileo, science was making a major advance in much the same way it always does, through an inspired vision on the part of a scientist dissatisfied with the current state of theory. The stubbornness and egocentricity that Galileo displayed are often

THE CHURCH TURNED GALILEO INTO A HERO, GIVING ITS ENEMIES A TALE THEY COULD RETELL FOR CENTURIES IN THEIR WAR AGAINST RELIGION.

involving himself, his atheistic friend Berkowitz, and a Catholic nun and scholar, Sister Maria Celeste, often seem contrived. For example, Rowland quotes at length from what is described as a scholarly work on Aristotle that Sister Maria has been working on for years. But the work "quoted" reads more like an encyclopedia entry on the philosopher than the product of decades of scholarship. It is laudable that Rowland introduces modern readers to the fundamentals of Aristotle's thought. But why choose such a transparent device?

companions of the ability to make such a leap. Without such traits, it is difficult to sustain one's views in the face of harsh criticism from the scientific establishment. But in replacing the Galileo myth with a more accurate history, we also see that science advances, much like religion, not by a simple-minded adherence to "the facts," but through a leap of faith. ■

Gene Callahan, the author of Economics for Real People, is an adjunct scholar of the Ludwig von Mises Institute.

[*Inventing a Nation: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Gore Vidal, Yale University Press, 198 pages*]

Patriotic Gore

By Justin Raimondo

GORE VIDAL'S VAST PANORAMA of American history—a series of seven novels, the “American Chronicles,” ranging in time from the Revolution (*Burr*) to the period from 1939-1954 (*Washington, D.C.* and *The Golden Age*)—utilized the author's considerable skills as a writer of fiction to dramatize historical truth. As a documentary codicil to that series, *Inventing a Nation* projects the same storyline—America's long road to empire—on a smaller screen.

With a novelist's eye for character and the telling detail, Gore Vidal takes us on a brisk ride through early American history as seen through the eyes of the Founders. Much is packed into this short book, yet it is never dense. We get portraits not just of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson as advertised in the title, but also James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, Tom Paine, and that “one true exotic” among America's inventors, Alexander Hamilton, the lean and hungry Cassius of the Revolution.

From the beginning, the country was divided between republicans, followers of Jefferson and Madison, and would-be royalists; between a British faction and the partisans of revolutionary France; between rural magnates, “anti-aristocratic aristocrats,” as Vidal describes them, concentrated in the southern and middle states, and ambitious young lawyers, resident in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, who looked to England and its stratified social system as the model for an American monarchy.

Vidal establishes his own stance early on in his portrait of George Mason, the Virginia planter and proto-libertarian author of the Bill of Rights. Mason opposed slavery and when the Constitutional Convention avoided resolving the

issue—and delayed those crucial amendments—Mason campaigned against ratification. “Then,” writes Vidal, “once the republic was in place, he refused to serve as one of his state's senators. He has few political heirs.”

Without doubt Vidal considers this lack a sign of degeneracy. Nostalgia permeates this volume: the prose has an elegiac ring to it, alternately angry and sad, combative and resigned. More than once Vidal cites Franklin's grim endorsement of the Constitution, in which the 87-year-old elder statesman of the Revolution predicted that “this is likely to be administered for a Course of Years and can only end in Despotism as other Forms have done before it, when the People shall become so corrupted as to need Despotic Government, being incapable of any other.”

Now, Vidal notes, two centuries and 16 years later, “Franklin's blunt dark prophecy has come true.” We live under the heel of the Patriot Act and in thrall to a league of latter-day über-Federalists who would put “an end to evil”—and to our constitutional Republic. Their success, he suspects, is a moral failure on the part of the American people, who

wrote: “I wish there was a war.” Vidal's sardonic analysis is that “he had read Plutarch” and “knew how swiftly one could rise in war.” When the Constitution was ratified over the objections of anti-Federalists, Vidal relates, “a parade featuring a ship called *The Hamilton*, on a float, sailed triumphantly along Wall Street as its ghost still does today.” Hamilton, who wanted Washington to wear a crown, embodied the self-ennobled American aristocracy that saw government and politics as a means of self-enrichment. His followers were a “bandit party,” as Vidal puts it, an 18th-century version of the Russian Mafia.

Adams, too, was a monarchist at heart. “Short, fat, given to bouts of vanity that alternated with its first cousin self-pity,” his brooding nature and dark view of men combined with Anglophilia to envision a uniquely American throne, and a court peopled by a natural aristocracy sprung from stony New England soil. He agreed with Hamilton's view that, as Vidal phrases it, “every society produces a ruling class. Why not accept this without any fuss?” With a single deft brushstroke, Vidal the master painter captures the bitterness and dark humor

HE SUSPECTS A **MORAL FAILURE** ON THE PART OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, WHO HAVE GIVEN UP THE **STERN REPUBLICAN VIRTUES** TO WALLOW IN THE **FLESHPOTS OF EMPIRE**.

have given up—he fears—the stern republican virtues to wallow in the fleshpots of empire. Vidal's complaint is indistinguishable from that of the paleo-conservatives. Wherever he got his reputation as a liberal, this polemic ought to dispel it for good.

The Founders, even the Federalist Adams, believed that monarchy was a system of government fit only for a corrupted people. The chief carrier of the monarchist spore was surely, in Vidal's view, the bastard Hamilton, who as a young groveling clerk (his own descrip-

tion) wrote: “I wish there was a war.” Adams's quip that George Washington was chosen commander-in-chief of the Continental Army because “he was always the tallest in the room.”

Washington is clearly the chief character in this narrative, the father not only of his country but of a brood of often errant sons whose antics would have split the young Republic asunder but for his imperturbable ability to steer a steady course between them. As a general, “he was in constant retreat,” but as long as he successfully fought the two

main enemies of the Revolution—desertion by his own troops and a corrupt Continental Congress that kept him ill-supplied—his “majestic presence” kept the rebel army together. Time, he knew, was on his side. The British, who were strangers in the land, would eventually tire of the struggle and go home—as they did, with an extra push from the French fleet. In an age when it is the Americans who have become the occupiers, U.S. military planners would do well to study how General Washington applied the elementary principles of guerrilla warfare so successfully that he hardly won more than a few pitched battles and yet still managed to win the war.

Jefferson, whose populism seems even more radical in retrospect, is clearly admired by Vidal, who is not, however, blind to the great man’s tendency to be overcome by his own enthusiasms. These were, however, tempered by Madison, and kept in check by Jefferson’s own innate practical sense. Like Washington and Adams, he was devoted to the survival of the Republic in waters made turbulent by Europe’s wars, which roiled the Atlantic and washed up on American shores. When Napoleon took control of the Spanish possessions in Louisiana and threatened the nascent American republic, Jefferson speculated that he might have to turn to his old enemy, England, for protection—a double irony for the leader of the pro-French party and author of the Declaration that had severed us from the mother country.

As the young republic entered its fifth year, the European powers cast their long shadows over the American political landscape: “the lobbyists of those countries,” Vidal relates, “set off many a coffeehouse row.” On the pro-British side, the perfidious Hamilton—Britain’s “Agent Seven”—met with London’s spy-master in America, George Hammond, betraying the American positions during negotiations over John Jay’s treaty. War with England seemed imminent, and the pro-French party agitated for it in the House. The moderates only managed to head it off by a razor-thin margin.

Like some Third World nation in the Cold War era, America was the scene of a propaganda proxy-war waged by contending superpowers, each with its own “amen corner,” but, when push came to shove, the Founders—yes, even Hamilton—put America first. This is dramatized in Vidal’s account of how Washington’s Farewell Address came to be written: Madison wrote the first draft, on which Washington based his second draft, a seamless collaboration “gloriously marbled” by Hamilton. A balanced, ecumenical federalism is enunciated, one that values unity but abhors despotism and is especially vigilant against the lures and stratagems of foreign interests.

The exhortation against “passionate attachments” and antipathies in foreign policy was originally authored by Hamilton, but Washington, we learn, elaborated on this theme more expansively and definitively, flatly stating that “*nothing* is more essential than that antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments should be avoided.” Of the two, Vidal is quick to note, “Washington’s version is most applicable to our Union today as the great combine of military, media, religious mania, and lust for oil has overthrown those safeguards that the first three presidents, for all their disagreements, were as one in wishing to preserve, protect, and defend.”

Like Franklin, Vidal greatly fears the corruption of the people that is the first and fatal symptom of the imperial disease. Yet his often fatalistic despair, in its sheer poignancy, may do more than he thought possible to reverse the trend. At one point, Vidal seems to attribute the decline of our old Republic to “the second law of thermodynamics (everything is always running down).” Yet this cannot be entirely true as long as Vidal’s work is widely read and appreciated. ■

Justin Raimondo is editorial director of Antiwar.com and author of An Enemy of the State: The Life of Murray N. Rothbard.

[*Catholicism and American Freedom: A Survey*, John T. McGreevy, W.W. Norton, 448 pages]

American and/or Catholic?

By Bradley J. Birzer

THE TOPIC OF RELIGION and its ability to move individual persons, ethnic groups, and entire nations to action is once again gaining a certain prominence among the better and more honest historians of American culture. Some, such as the University of Kansas’s pioneering J.C.D. Clark, have gone so far as to argue that the American Revolution was the last war of the Reformation. Religious fervor increased dramatically with the Second Great Awakening of the early- to mid-19th century, and new scholarship is finally starting to realize the importance of faith in the American Civil War. Calhoun understood this best in his famous “March 4th Speech” during the debates over the Compromise of 1850. With the Baptists and Methodists split into pro-slavery and anti-slavery factions, the venerable South Carolinian noted that the Republic itself would soon collapse. Indeed, it has become very difficult to account for the bravery of Northern and Southern men without recourse to identifying the strong religious faith within the ranks of the volunteers.

Even histories of the Cold War now seem to be taking religion into account, mostly because of the sheer importance of Pope John Paul II, perhaps the greatest anti-communist of the 20th century and the architect of the fall of the Soviet empire. In a post-9/11 world, though, religion might just be construed as the exclusive province of fanatics, with historians conveniently forgetting the many rosaries said in Catholic communities across America praying for the conversion of Russia during the Cold War.

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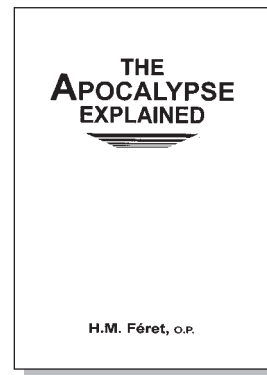
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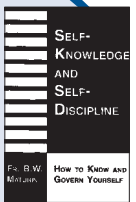
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To be sure, though, the average American history department—history being perhaps the most ideologically left-wing of all academic disciplines—is not ready to side with a Christopher Dawson or a Russell Kirk, who each proclaimed religion as the basis of all culture. Still, the history profession is undoubtedly moving in that direction. Despite this rather important trend in the field, it has been a long time since an historian of the quality of a John Higham or a Ray Allen Billington effectively explored the tensions between American liberalism and rights on the one hand, and Roman Catholic communitarianism and duties on the other. Higham's and Billington's classics, respectively *Strangers in the Land* (1955) and *The Protestant Crusade* (1938), are landmarks in American historiography, but they had, until this year, remained the only really serious books on the subject for a half-century.

Now the chairman of the Department of History at the University of Notre Dame, John T. McGreevy, ably follows the lead of these two greats and presents the story of American Catholicism in a painstakingly researched and breathtakingly paced new book, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A Survey*. It is more than a worthy successor to Higham's and Billington's earlier works, and it should place McGreevy in an exalted and rare class of thinkers.

McGreevy, who received his B.A. from Notre Dame in 1986, originally hails from the northern Great Plains and describes himself as having been raised during the last period of Catholic ghettoization within America. Though a prominent historian from Harvard has claimed that McGreevy's book is part autobiography—that is, the working out of McGreevy's faith in relation to his profession—the book has an objective tone that is both striking and welcome, though McGreevy relies on anecdotes to keep his study grounded. The author's narrative hook is the conflict between American liberal nationalism—with its characteristic traits of individual auton-

omy and Protestant private-judgment—and a much more organic Roman Catholic universalism. He asks the classic question that every American Catholic must face in his life: can one be a faithful Catholic, loyal to Rome, and also an American, loyal to the ideals of this country?

At a recent conference held in McGreevy's honor, the author argued that "Reformation polemics shaped nineteenth-century debates" regarding the place of Roman Catholics in America. As America moved from the traditionalist and more virtuous republic the Founders intended in the late 18th century to the more democratic, commercially oriented nation of the 19th century, the question of Catholicism and citizenship became especially important to American intellectuals. Indeed, when Catholic immigrants finally arrived in large numbers in the late 1840s and early 1850s, the reaction against them was intense. One prominent Unitarian minister feared that the "national government, now so fearfully subservient to

still refused to open a chapter at the University of Notre Dame, claiming its curriculum to be too Thomist to allow a true liberal education.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, it seemed to most American liberals that only one tool could effectively counter the Romanist threat: public education, to teach both good citizenship and Protestant values. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, the grand victor at Appomattox, stated it in his typically blunt fashion when serving as president: no public monies for sectarian schooling, ever. "If we are to have another contest in the near future of our national existence, I predict that the dividing line will not be Mason and Dixon's but between patriotism and intelligence on the one side, and superstition, ambition and ignorance on the other." Public education, he thought, was the proper remedy "to preserve us as a nation." Though originally a staunch Democrat, Grant now represented the party that decried "Rum, Rebellion, and Romanism." His rhetoric must have hit Americans rather hard, having just lost

HE ASKS THE CLASSIC QUESTION THAT EVERY **AMERICAN CATHOLIC** MUST FACE IN HIS LIFE: CAN ONE BE A FAITHFUL CATHOLIC, **LOYAL TO ROME**, AND ALSO AN **AMERICAN, LOYAL TO THE IDEALS OF THIS COUNTRY?**

the shameful slave power, would then be no less under the dominion of a standing army of priests and friars."

One cannot relegate such hostile sentiments to the 19th century alone. A full century later, Paul Blanshard wrote his highly successful anti-Catholic polemic *American Freedom and Catholic Power*. The "Catholic problem is still with us," he argued, and Americans must mightily resist the "antidemocratic social policies of the hierarchy." Stalin and communist dictatorship, Blanshard claimed in his sequel to *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, served as the only evils equal to the papacy. And a decade later, in 1960, Phi Beta Kappa

620,000 men in the last conflict. Would Catholics—perhaps following the lead of the draft-dodging, riotous New York Irish in the summer of 1863—soon arm themselves and claim America for the papacy? It had been a fear since the 17th century, when New England Puritans armed themselves for Sunday worship.

McGreevy wisely avoids painting the picture in terms of a simple victimization of Catholics. Rather, he clearly shows how prominent Catholic intellectuals—starting as high as the papacy and moving down to various lay groups—fought back with a staunch verve. Beginning with their criticism of the failed liberal revolutions of 1848,

Catholics claimed that nationalism and individualism within larger national communities stemmed from the disordered thoughts of Rousseau. The 1864 Vatican "Syllabus of Errors" condemned "progress, liberalism and modern civilization." True freedom could be found in natural, organic community, and the notion of subsidiarity, and true republicanism relied on the promotion of virtue, the only solid basis of liberty. In this, they echoed such intensely anti-Catholic Founders as John Adams. "By destroying religious unity," the Catholics counter, "the Reformation hastened the development of absolutist regimes and the destruction of political liberty." Real liberty, Leo XIII noted, comes from adherence to the objective natural and divine laws, not to the subjective private judgments of autonomous individuals.

Significantly, the only time McGreevy reveals any aspect of his own beliefs in the entire narrative comes in the last two pages of the book:

The philosopher Charles Taylor's brilliant investigation of our moral resources places current tensions [especially on life and social justice issues] in perspective. Taylor readily admits the importance of modern notions of autonomy and the "free self-determining subject," and he notes that affirmations of universal human rights emerged in spite of Catholic nostalgia for Christendom, not because of it. At the same time Taylor urges Catholics and other people of good will to counter an ethical individualism unwilling to recognize any authority beyond the self, and an economic individualism pliant before the market-place. A romantic view of individual autonomy, often commingled in the United States with anti-Catholicism, may weaken the solidarity needed to ensure dignity for society's most vulnerable members.

Though brief, the passage reveals much about McGreevy's well-informed views, and it places him squarely in the vein of the Christian Humanists of the 1950s, such as Dawson and Kirk.

There are things, here and there, to which one might take exception in McGreevy's book. For example, he spends a considerable amount of time on liberal Protestant reactions to Roman Catholicism, but he rarely mentions the division between fundamentalist Protestants and Roman Catholics. There is no mention, for example, of the Scopes trial or of Prohibition. These are very minor criticisms, and it is bad form to complain about things the author did not intend to write. Indeed, one of the things that comes across so beautifully in McGreevy's book is that he has accomplished exactly what he set out to do. If the history profession were less ideological, it would surely recognize *Catholicism and American Freedom* as a classic. ■

Bradley J. Birzer is an assistant professor of history at Hillsdale College and a Senior Fellow with the Center for the American Idea in Houston.

[*Envy*, Joseph Epstein, Oxford, 109 pages]

Shades of Green

By Jeremy Lott

SET DOWN IN the 6th century by Pope Gregory the Great, the seven deadly sins were placed opposite the seven virtues—numerology was all the rage back then—to serve as a simple guide for how people should not live. These were errors that, if pursued willfully and persistently, would likely count as a sin against the Holy Ghost. That is, if one's life were governed by anger, say, or gluttony or pride, it was thought that there wouldn't be room for faith, temperance, or any of the other virtues that are supposed to bring us closer to God—thus the "deadly" bit.

Perhaps listing these mortal monstrosities was a mistake. The "seven deadlies" quickly took on a life of their own and generated endless fascination among knaves and writers (but I repeat myself). At a recent dinner, the host asked if we could name the deadlies, and I reeled them off. Then he asked us to name the seven virtues. If memory serves, between the four guests we got five right. It is not a coincidence that Oxford is doing a series of seven short books on the sins and not one volume on the virtues. Michael Eric Dyson has claimed *Pride*, and Simon Blackburn's *Lust* has just been published in time for Valentine's Day.

Here we have the unassuming Joseph Epstein, represented by a simple cartoon line drawing set against the dark green backdrop of *Envy*. Epstein, a recently retired lecturer at Northwestern University and former editor of the *American Scholar*, was the natural choice for a study of the subject, having lately written a fun examination of snobbery in the United States. Of course, he downplays this in the introduction, saying that some of the sexier deadlies were already taken.

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The author's natural impishness is on display in chapter one, where he contrasts his besetting sin with all the rest and finds *them* wanting. Envy, though not exactly enjoyable, is the "subtlest," "most insidious," "most endemic," and, later, the "cruellest" of the list. "Most of us could still sleep decently if accused of any of the other six deadly sins," Epstein writes, "but to be accused of envy would be seriously upsetting, so clearly does such an accusation go directly to character. The other deadly sins, though all have the disapproval of religion, do not so thoroughly, so deeply demean, diminish, and disqualify a person."

One could say Epstein is trying to make the other sins jealous but then would risk falling into one of the most common misunderstandings about envy and jealousy that has crept into the language, including into the dictionaries. With the "deep pedantic delight that one takes in trumping ... recognized language expert[s]" Epstein explains that one is "jealous of what one has, envious of what other people have." The covetousness that the tenth commandment (which Epstein inexplicably mislabels as the sixth) rails against would be at least a close synonym.

ENVY IS BOUND MORE CLOSELY TO HUMAN NATURE THAN ANY OF THE OTHER DEADLIES.

But, boasting aside, how bad is envy, really? Lust and gluttony seem to cause more misery: both enthrall; both take normal desires and elevate them to the point that people lose all sense of proportion; both have a depreciatory effect on health and longevity. Greed or anger, at first blush, would take pride of place over Epstein's pet sin. But it is not that simple: such sins rarely exist in isolation. Take a closer look at the glutton and you will find a man who enviously eyes that pie across the room. Scold the angry child who throws a tantrum and you will hear him complain that *it's not fair* that his sister got the toy and he did not. As for lust, it is often heightened if

its object has a ring on her finger. The thing that frequently undergirds the other deadlies is envy.

Making its way through Epstein's usual wry style is an argument that is, literally, deadly serious. Granted, "we have all felt flashes of envy, even if in varying intensities, from its minor pricks to its deep, soul-destroying lacerating stabs," but it runs all the way to the bone as well. He insists that envy is bound more closely to human nature than any of the other deadlies, and decides, unwisely, to pick a fight with St. Paul over the matter.

He writes that the "reform-minded" saint thought he could root out envy. After all, Paul wrote, "Love does not envy," and love did hold an exalted position in his theology, inspiring one of the most beautiful chapters in the New Testament (I Corinthians 13). In Epstein's rendition, Paul believed that religious conversion would drive out envy.

Epstein labels this thinking utopian and expounds, "Christian or not, everyone must decide for him- or her self how realistic this is; one must decide, finally, whether envy is or is not part of human nature. If it's not, it can perhaps be shorn from us all. If it is part of human nature, as Aristotle and the other Greek philoso-

phers thought it was, then the problem becomes one of damage control. How best can we keep it contained?"

This is well and good but has next to nothing to do with the thinking of St. Paul. The internal argument in Paul's letter to the Romans about the old, bad man and the new, supposedly good man, both of whom inhabit his body, is ignored. So too are the cranky saint's constant railings against this or that fault in a local congregation. In fact, far from having some utopian view of human nature, as Epstein suggests, St. Paul believed in Original Sin, with effects that persist long after conversion.

This lapse on Epstein's part is interesting because it suggests that in some areas his knowledge is more superficial than the reader would think, laced as his writing is with wonderful quotations from La Rochefoucauld, Shopenhauer, and the like. When he sticks to his specialty of modern literature, he is no doubt well read, but the further out he ventures, the less likely he is to really try to understand the material.

Prudence and charity force me to forego the obvious joke here about sloth, but Epstein is certainly nobody's idea of a dummy. His examination of the academy, for instance, is brief, barbed, and on point. He nominates "American academics, especially those in the humanities" as the group most in the thrall of envy. These tortured scholars simultaneously feel themselves greatly superior and vastly undervalued, above their countrymen yet isolated from them and insufficiently rewarded and revered by them. They have about them a perpetually disappointed air: one senses that they feel the world has, somehow, let them down. Sometimes this will reveal itself in a general sourness; sometimes it takes the form of hopelessly radical political views. These perspectives, it does not take long to recognize, usually feature a complex shifting and reorientation of society so that people like themselves will be allowed a justly deserved role of power.

Epstein speaks from personal experience here. He was forced out of the *American Scholar* because of his fogeyish, non-trendy—call them conservative—views. Though he was likely an able teacher, tenure at Northwestern was neither offered nor expected, because Epstein has only a B.A. from the University of Chicago. The modern academic guild system simply would not have stood for it: if they let this learned Philistine in, there could be no telling what kind of riffraff they would have to allow through the door. ■

Jeremy Lott is assistant managing editor and assistant Web editor of the American Spectator.

Kerry-ed Away



A London *Sunday Times* article written by a beautiful ex-editor of mine, Sarah Baxter, had me apologizing for ... kissing and telling. Actually

I have never kissed and told, and I certainly have never told without having kissed—as some celebrities tend to do nowadays. But the clever Sarah phrased it in a way that made me sound like a Hollywood character.

It happened very long ago. A great friend of mine, Harry the Marquis of Worcester, introduced me to a rather short and plump but extraordinarily beautiful and pouting girl by the name of Emma Gilbey. Her claim to fame was Gilbey's Gin, although none of the profits from demon drink had passed down her way. Then she got really famous. Her cousin, James Gilbey, was overheard by the spooks calling Princess Diana "Squidgy" over the mobile and the rest, as they say, is history.

Just about that time, Harry and Emma broke up, and I took her out for awhile. (We down-and-dirty Europeans never dump our old ladies to marry younger trophy wives but reserve the right to trip the light fantastic with women we are not married to.) It was hunky-dory for awhile, but then Emma—an extremely ambitious and intelligent woman—decided to move to Washington, D.C. Whenever I'd go to the nation's capital, which was not often, I'd give her a ring and we'd dine together.

Now this is a hard thing to explain, but people do tend to tell each other secrets, and one of hers was that she was involved with JFK Mark II, the man who is now running for president. More details followed, and then it was time for a White House correspondents' dinner. I had had much too much to drink—as a guest of Arnaud de Borchgrave, I was seated next to Fawn Hall—and when John Kerry lumbered by I heard myself

yelling, "Senator, do you like to have sex in limousines?" Well, he didn't look best pleased, but then he's a politician and knows how to roll with the punches. He also knew that I knew and left it well enough alone.

The story of a separated senator and an English girl on the make faded—until just recently. Sarah Baxter stirred it all up again with her story. Oh yes, I almost forgot. There's more to it than just Kerry. The *New York Times* is also involved, because—yes, dear readers, you've guessed it—Emma Gilbey is now the wife of Bill Keller, the executive editor of the *Times*, a man I've never met but hear is a very good fellow. (After the pretentious Howell Raines, it would be difficult not to be an improvement.)

So the London *Sunday Times*, owned by Rupert Murdoch, asks a rhetorical question but puts it in my mouth, namely, will Emma Gilbey influence her hubby to endorse John Kerry as the next U.S. pres-

Much ado about nothing, in reality. In Europe, politicians, especially in *la belle* France, all have mistresses. British politicians occasionally are caught with men in public lavatories, and nobody bats an eye.

I don't know much about Kerry except that he depresses the hell out of me. He looks as gloomy as a rainy Sunday night in Belfast, Northern Ireland. But don't be fooled. This guy is running for president but he's in the wrong racket. He shoulda been a gigolo. His first wife, Julia Thorn, helped him go into politics. (Helped is a euphemism for total financing, including breakfast cereals.) It would be unfair for me to jump to conclusions, but once he separated from Julia Thorn—whose assets were not unlimited—the Gilbey millions may have looked very attractive, until he found out there were no millions. Teresa Heinz's fortune also came the old fashioned way. Through marriage. I find it particularly amusing when the press refers to her as an heiress. An heiress inherits from her father or mother. Poor Senator Heinz must be turning over in his untimely grave.

THE STORY OF A SEPARATED SENATOR AND AN ENGLISH GIRL ON THE MAKE FADED—UNTIL JUST RECENTLY.

ident? On the face of it, she should. Better a man one knows than an unknown, but then women are not always so rational. It seems that Kerry got cold feet and Emma Bovary—sorry, Emma Gilbey-Keller—took off with a rock star by the name of David Gilmour of Pink Floyd fame. (She rang me when I was in the shower—my wife passed the telephone and said she hoped it would electrocute me—to announce that she had run off with Pink Floyd. I thought it was an NBA basketball player, and she hung up on me.)

Be that as it may, both Kerrys married very rich people and can wag the dog all they want. There was a lot of tension over money with Julia Thorn, and that's putting it mildly. If Kerry wins the big prize, Teresa's moolah might become less important. After all, Bill Clinton has become a very rich man for having serviced Monica Lewinsky in the Oval Office. Still, the big question is whether Emma Gilbey will influence Bill Keller to endorse or not. Stay tuned. ■